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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess both the needs of students in transition from elementary to middle school and the extent to which those needs were being met. A questionnaire was used to obtain the perceptions of 117 sixth-grade students, 64 parents of sixth-grade students, 37 parents of fifth-grade students, nine sixth-grade teachers, and four counselors in School District No. 69 (Qualicum), British Columbia, Canada. Findings generally point out that these students demonstrated many needs in their adjustment to the change in school. These needs were related to the new experiences and novel routines, a new organization of school, and new academic, social, and personal challenges. The other groups also perceived the students to have significant needs. These groups differed in their views of which needs were most important, and divergence was found among groups as to the degree to which particular needs were being met. Appendices include a summary of frequencies of response for all survey items, a set of questionnaire samples, and a computer answer sheet. (Author/RH)

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Report No. 85:05

# A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR TRANSITION FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS TO MIDDLE SCHOOLS

GRANT NUMBER: DG 363

AUTHOR(S): Philip Gardner & Robert Carpenter

PROJECT SITE OR SAMPLE: School District No. 69 (Qualicum)

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PS 015518

# A Needs Assessment for Transition from Elementary Schools to Middle Schools

[as undertaken in School District No. 69 (Qualicum)]

Submitted by

Philip J. Gardner
and
Robert W. Carpenter

April 1, 1985
Qualicum Beach
British Columbia

**Acknowledgements**

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***

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UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Department of Psychological Foundations in Education

The report of the project,

"A Needs Assessment for Transition from
Elementary Schools to Middle Schools
[as undertaken in
School District No. 69 (Qualicum)]"

by Philip J. Gardner and Robert W. Carpenter is accepted as fulfilling the requirements for ED-D 598 in the Master of Education program in School Counselling.

April, 1985

R. Vance Peavy, Ph. D.
Project Supervisor.

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## Abstract

Transition is recognized as a vital element in educational program planning affecting the student's successful passage throughout all levels of schooling.

The purpose of this major Study conducted in School District No. 69 (Qualicum) was two-fold. The authors began with an assessment of the needs of students in transition from elementary to Middle School. The degree to which these needs were being met by present situations was then also assessed. The perceptions of representative samples of 117 Grade six students, 64 parents of Grade six students, 37 parents of Grade five students, together with 11 teachers of Grade five, 9 teachers of Grade six and 4 Counsellors were measured using slightly modified forms of the same comprehensive questionnaire.

The Results generally point out that these students demonstrated many needs in their adjustment to the change of school. These needs are related to the new experiences of students with novel routines, a new organization of school, and with new academic, social and personal challenges. The other groups also perceived the students to have significant needs. These groups did differ in their views of which needs were of most importance. There was also a divergence among groups as to the degree to which particular needs were being met.

The Results are reported in three formats: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Interview. These are followed by some general Conclusions and Recommendations which complete the report.

It is anticipated that this report will be of interest to educators wherever the Middle School model has been or is expected to be adopted.

# Introduction

## History of Middle School in School District No. 69 (Qualicum)

The Middle School concept, though well advanced in parts of the United States, is a relatively new concept for Canada, British Columbia, and School District No. 69 (Qualicum). The modern Middle Schools in North America were developed to address the needs of today's children who are experiencing adolescence up to five years earlier than they were in past decades. The additional aspect of emotional stresses related to rapid physical maturation contributes to the need for transition programs in the middle grades.

Grade 7 students of the traditional elementary schools were in some ways ready for the challenges that could be provided in a departmentalized school setting. To accommodate this need the junior secondaries were to a great extent modelled after the senior schools with high profile sports, cheerleaders, drama clubs, dances, and full departmentalized instruction. There was little transition from elementary to secondary school. The change was abrupt. Many students arriving in junior secondary schools found themselves lacking the skills needed for academic and social adjustment. (Draud, 1979)

The children of today may be ready to leave the nurturing environment of elementary education sooner but many are not prepared for nor able to adapt to the increased demands for responsibility

existent in most secondary institutions. The Middle School was devised to provide for a transition through early adolescence and from elementary to secondary school education.

In 1973 School District No. 69 (Qualicum) had one Junior-Senior Secondary School (Grades 8-12), one Junior High School (Grades 8-10), two large elementary schools (K-7), and several small rural schools of various sizes and grade groupings. The district was growing and planning to build a new high school. Several district administrators had become interested in the Middle School concept then flourishing in the United States. Four principals examined the existent organization of schools in S.D. 69 and presented a report to the Board of School Trustees. The committee cited the following concerns with the organization in existence at that time (Grades K-7, 8-10, and 11-12). There were problems encountered by students making the transition from Grade 7 to Grade 8 and from Grade 10 to Grade 11. Some students were spending too many years in one school or too few in another. Grade 6 and 7 students needed to be challenged by exploratory subjects offered by specialist teachers in properly equipped facilities. ("Report of the Principals," 1973)

It seemed that building a new high school opened the door to the creation of two feeder middle schools using the older buildings which contained specialty areas and equipment. This would allow Grade 6 and 7 students the opportunity to experience the specialty courses and alleviate some of the concerns identified

above. It would, however, have necessitated the bussing of rural Grades 6 and 7 students into town schools where before they had attended their own community school. The controversy over the decision to implement Middle Schools raged. Indeed questions regarding the decision to organize around Middle Schools in District 69 still persist ten years later.

Parksville and Qualicum Middle Schools opened in September 1976. The first year of operation was beset by numerous difficulties necessitating public meetings in October 1977 for parents and teachers "...to state their views on Middle Schools and to analyze the tasks of Public Education in S.D. 69." (Sloat, 1977) The major idea expressed in the public meetings was that the Middle School should provide a gradual transition from the elementary to the secondary school. This was seen to occur in the following ways: The child should have fewer teachers in Grade 6 than in Grade 7; there should be less movement for Grade 6 students than for Grade 8s; an effective orientation program for Grade 6 students was needed; the establishment of self-discipline and acceptance of responsibility should be a gradual process; there should be a very close liaison, coordination, and articulation between the Middle Schools and the elementary and secondary schools; the child should have the same teacher for the traditional basic subjects. (Sloat, 1977)

School District 69 now employs a 6-3-4 school grade organization. The elementary schools enrol children in kindergarten

and Grades 1 through 5. Middle School contains Grades 6, 7, and 8, while Grades 9 through 12 are offered at secondary school. There are two geographical school groupings. Three elementary schools feed Parksville Middle School and four elementary schools feed Qualicum Middle School.

In April 1984, an External Review Committee chaired by retired Superintendent Frances Fleming, submitted a report of its findings on the Middle Schools in School District 69 to the Board of School Trustees. The committee made supportive comments in expressing a unanimous hope that the district Middle Schools would survive. ("News Release," 1984) Encouraged with this positive reinforcement, the Board reaffirmed its stance on retaining the Middle School concept, at least until the completion of the next review to be conducted five years hence. The programs offered by the Middle Schools were seen as valuable to 11 to 13 year old students. An effective transition program became necessary for these students so that full advantage could be taken of Middle School offerings and so that parents knowledgeable of the system's advantages would support the concept.

## Review of the Literature

> Whatever is accomplished to welcome the new student is usually cursory--a perfunctory orientation superimposed onto the first day of school, a day already overwhelming with its countless new forms, schedules and rules....The student's individual concerns are often negated. His fate is not so unlike the apocryphal sailor whose lesson in swimming consisted of being thrown into the ocean. (Warchol, 1979, p. 233)

While the opinion of Warchol may seem a bit extreme to some readers it does point out a general weakness of some programs which are intended to orient and ease the transition of children making the important change from elementary to their next schooling experience. It is difficult at this time to supply evidence either to support or to argue with Warchol's contention that few effective transition programs exist. This is because there is a paucity of literature on the subject. There is little in the way of any comprehensive articles or studies that deal with the subject of **Transition** let alone any which give a treatment of the needs of 'transescents' and the means to address these needs.

We, the authors of this study, have engaged in a lengthy search of the literature available to us by a manual search of the University of Victoria's library holdings as well as by having commissioned a computer search using the Educational Resource Information Centre (ERIC). In both cases we have been able to identify and review less than 30 pertinent references. Many of these have not been closely related to the specific subject

of Transition from elementary school to Middle School or even Junior High School. ERIC descriptors for the computer search included: Middle School, Orientation, Articulation, Transition, Adjustment, Student Relationships, and Attitudes.

From the existing literature that we have surveyed, one of the impressions that we have received is that many of the types of concerns of parents and students seem to be universally shared and common to these groups no matter their geographic location nor the particular organization of "Middle" schooling offered.

Another strong impression has been that many of the programs traditionally offered to address the needs of transescents fall short of satisfying many of these needs. It echoes the opinion of Warchol when other authors point out that many programs deal with orientation to the new building and to some differences in academic expectations, but less frequently with the many other facets of need demonstrated by these "in betweenagers".

As well many programs seem to proceed yearly without serious thought to their effectiveness nor to the possibility of there being any change in the needs of young adolescents living in a fast changing world. Lipitz (1977) opines:

> One of the most frequently ignored social transitions in the life cycle of individuals has been the move from late childhood to early adolescence. (Blyth, Simmons, and Bush, 1978, p. 150)

This period of change is affected by many factors. The individual's prior experience in school, level of maturity and personal characteristics, and the developmental changes brought about by emerging adolescence all come into play. Although the rationale for establishing middle education devoted to the needs of children age 11 to 14 varies from area to area, the original concept centred around a recognition that contemporary youth in this age range demonstrate significant differences from both younger elementary as well as older students. (Thornburg, 1981)

Some developmental changes in these children include an obvious spurt in growth with the appearance of secondary sex characteristics and the steady movement from a cognitive orientation characterized by the organizing of information around concrete and structured concepts toward one of more formal operations characterized by abstract thought and the use of logic and reasoning to make decisions. Their social/emotional orientation develops toward an increasing reference to their peer group rather than to the significant adults in their lives. There is an increasing preoccupation with self. Together with this, adolescents begin to challenge the values and beliefs of adults in an attempt to formulate their own. All of this comes at a time of a greater incidence of required decisions concerning the individual's academic program which begin to lead to longer range life planning and eventually to career choices.

Bent (1976) has made the point that orientation programs for the transescent should be a process rather than an event. We concur with this perspective and further would like to add that the personal needs of transition are at least as important as the other more traditional concerns, such as academics.

It seems clear that most writers agree that this period of adjustment contains the potential for facilitating productive, new, and exciting experiences for the individual who is growing up rapidly. At the same time measures should be taken to provide that person with the equipment to deal with a bombardment of changes along with accompanying anxiety and doubt. It would seem that these two themes should be addressed in any comprehensive program to assist the transition process.

Bent (1976) elaborates:

> Working through new ideas and feelings and questioning identity in the process is not easy. The adolescent needs security to balance his doubts. (p. 352)

Finally we should mention the importance that several writers have ascribed to the effect of good parent orientation and communication between the school and home. This seems to be at least as important as what is done directly with the students themselves. Deller (1980) points out that the fears and erroneous perceptions of parents must be influenced in some positive way if the transition of their children is to be successful and not characterized by a "slow, reluctant, and suspicious adjustment" to their new school. (p. 12)

We would like to close with some thoughts expressed by the mother of a boy in transition to Middle School concerning what her son will need upon his entrance. She reports that he will need challenge--the opportunity to discuss, experiment, and question. He will need structure along with freedom to choose. He will need to be treated as an individual by people who will take the time to listen to him and let him know that his ideas are important. (Oberlin and Oberlin, 1976)

It would seem to be important guidance for anyone who shares with the transescent this very important and active time of life.

## Specific Differences for Students in Transition from Elementary to Middle School

While most of the factors that play a role in the transition of elementary students to Junior High School are also applicable to students moving on to Middle School, some differences do exist. In most cases the students adjusting to a new Middle School are younger than their counterparts in Junior High School. Middle School students have to make the new school adjustment as young as 11 years of age while Junior High School does not force that adjustment until 13 years of age. Not only do Middle School students enter a new, larger, and more complicated system at an earlier age, they must also leave their neighbourhood school sooner.

A new Middle School student leaves behind a school in which he or she has climbed in status from Kindergarten to the esteemed position of senior Grade 5 student. Left behind are the child's playground and familiar classmates and teachers. Elementary school rules which have taken six years to master now give way to more and different ones. For rural school children, a longer bus ride into town brings them face to face with children of the same age and older, from other rural areas as well as from town. For some adjusting to all these changes is taken in stride. For others adjustment is difficult.

For the statements above that hold negative connotations, there are positive juxtapositions. Stimulating educational challenges meet the Grade 6 student at Middle School. The student

is introduced to Home Economics, Industrial Education, Band, Physical Education, and Art in specialty rooms taught by specialist teachers. Further challenges include the mastering of more comprehensive research and report writing skills. Many students respond positively to such challenges. Others are overwhelmed by the scope of subject matter and the school timetable necessary to facilitate such course offerings.

Some students find the new school provides a fresh start. A mixture of students from various schools provides the opportunity to make new friends in the classroom. A larger school heightens the chance of meeting children of similar interests. Finally, the Middle School, more than the elementary school, offers the students, through the democratic process of class meetings, the chance to give input into school affairs and even to effect considerable change.

The Junior Secondary system may offer all of the challenges stated above and more, but the Middle School is charged with the task of **gradually** increasing student responsibility enabling the student to make the transition from elementary school to secondary school.

## Current School Transition and Orientation Practices in S.D. 69

Most educators are aware of the transition facing Grade 6 students moving to Middle School. A variety of programs have been undertaken to make this transition less traumatic for the new Middle School student.

Some of these programs have developed separately in the two District Middle Schools. Others have developed through consultation between them. Each year new ideas are tried and modifications to older ideas occur. The two Middle Schools and their elementary feeders do not operate identical transition programs. Both groupings do give considerable attention to the process of transition from Grade 5 in elementary to Grade 6 in Middle School in some of the following ways.

In the spring months, elementary schools invite Grade 5 parents to meetings with Middle School administration and counsellors for information and discussion. The counsellors host informal coffee parties at many elementary schools for parent orientation. The Middle School administrative team meets with Grade 5 pupils at the elementary school to explain the school handbook and to send electives information home. A Grade 5 parents' night is held for them to meet the Grade 6 teachers. Grade 5 parents are invited to see a display of students' work at the Middle School as part of a Grade 5 parent orientation meeting. Grade 5 students are paired with Grade 6 students who make contact by letter in February and then host the younger students at the Middle School

during a visit and tour in May. The Middle school band teacher and student members visit the Grade 5s to recruit new members and to familiarize them with the band program.

Throughout the year, area counsellors work with Grade 5 students teaching decision-making skills and facilitating Class Meetings which have been recognized as being important to the student entering Middle School. In June, meetings are held between Middle and elementary school teachers and Counsellors to help make the best class placement for the graduating Grade 5 students. Feedback sessions between Grade 5 and 6 teachers are held in the fall to check on student adjustment and to discuss the success of placement practices.

One Middle School program known as **Project Help** offers an elective course for Grade 8 students to become involved in the transition program of Grade 5s and 6s. These Grade 8 students write letters to elementary school principals, conduct discussions, and give slide presentations for Grade 5 students and parents. The program is evaluated the following September to December by the next year's Grade 8 students who enrol in **Project Help.** The program is one of developmental counselling in which the Grade 8 students become aware of the fears and concerns of many Grade 6 students. Both Grade 8s and 6s are thought to benefit from the program.

## Purpose of the Needs Assessment

Rimmer and Burt (1980) speak about the value of needs assessment when they state that it is:

> ...an integral part of educational planning and evaluation that can be used by school counsellors to plan effective guidance programs and to evaluate on-going activities. (p. 59)

These authors also see this exercise as one that promotes interest in program development and demonstrates any need for improvement. Depending on the results, present activities can be maintained, modified, or eliminated and new ones developed. Needs Assessment is also seen as a method that involves the community, parents, and students in setting goals for guidance programming. The guidance "consumers" as it were, can have a direct role in program planning and development. (Rimmer and Burt, 1980) This is also one of our intentions.

The stated purpose of this Needs Assessment is to determine the transition needs of students who are moving from elementary school to Grade 6 at the Middle School. This is to be done under the four categories of Need: **Routines, Academic, Social,** and **Personal.**

Secondly, the Assessment is intended to evaluate the degree of satisfaction among selected groups for the way these needs have been met by the present school programs. The results of both of these measurements will be presented and Recommendations

based on suitable activities designed to address the demonstrated needs will then be detailed.

Finally, it is also the purpose of this study to generate data and discussion which will be of interest to those in other school districts in British Columbia or elsewhere, who presently have adopted or are considering the adoption of the Middle School model. It is felt that knowledge of the effects and perceptions generated by District 69's experience will provide information valuable to any group considering programs designed to facilitate the meeting of Transition needs of students entering Middle School.

## The Goals of Research

1. to assess the specific NEEDS that Grade 6 students new to the Middle School see as important to a good adjustment to their new school.

2. to assess the NEEDS that parents of Grade 6 students see as being important to their child's adjustment to the Middle School.

3. to assess the NEEDS that teachers of Grade 6 students see as being important to their new students.

4. to assess the NEEDS that teachers of Grade 5 students see as being important to their outgoing students.

5. to assess the NEEDS that counsellors see as being important to student adjustment.

6. for each of these groups, to assess the degree to which each sees these needs being met.

We also had two additional goals:

7. to assess the NEEDS that the parents of Grade 6 students have for information about Transition and to assess how well these needs for information are being met.

8. to assess the preconceived attitudes of Grade 5 parents (who had little or no prior experience with the Middle School) concerning the degree to which they anticipated their child's needs for Transition to Grade 6 would be met.

From this point on for the sake of clarity, the authors have decided to use the following terms exclusively when referring to the subject groups of our study:

Grade 6 students

Grade 6 parents

Grade 6 teachers

Grade 5 parents

Grade 5 teachers

Counsellors

## Methodology

### Design of the Instrument

The authors of this study, both having had teaching experience within the District 69 Middle Schools and feeder elementary schools, identified four categories of transitional needs peculiar to the Middle School environment: **Routines, Academic, Social, and Personal.** The assessment instrument was to be structured around the four categories of transition by first generating broad goals for students in transition and then by writing items to survey the importance of identified needs which followed from these goals. The instrument was further designed to assess how successfully the needs were perceived to be met by present programs.

The broad goals for each category of need for students are as follows:

1. Routines

   A. to be able to navigate effectively without getting lost in the school building.

   B. to be informed about and be able to understand the school rules.

   C. to know routines. (e.g., getting ready for classes, fire drill, etc.)

   D. to know what services are available for them and who provides these services.

2. Academic

   A. to be academically prepared for Grade 6.

   B. to know expectations regarding coursework, homework, and assignments.

   C. to have necessary help and consultation to meet these expectations.

   D. to understand reporting methods and grading practices, as well as what these mean in terms of feedback on their performances.

3. Social

   A. to have sufficient feelings of adjustment to their social environment. ("at homeness")

   B. to feel a part of social context as well as a part of social events.

   C. to have good relationships with their peers, friends, and school personnel.

   D. to feel accepted as a person.

4. Personal

   A. to be assisted by the school and its personnel to develop healthy and maturing self-concepts.

   B. to feel sufficiently comfortable with themselves at school in terms of personal adjustment, role, and identity.

   C. to be able to get help from others with a developmental concern, or a more serious problem. Also that they recognize others who are available and able to help them at school.

Following the writing of the student goals for transition, and the generation of numerous response items to cover each broad goal, these items were priorized. Repetitious ones were removed and finally the language was modified to best suit the literacy of Grade 6 students. The authors then consulted with a resource team consisting of Dr. Vance Peavy and Dr. Rey Carr of the University of Victoria, Mrs. Janet Mort, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, S.D. 63 (Saanich), Mr. Don Bosnich, Superintendent of Schools, S.D. 69 (Qualicum), and Mrs. Joan Felling and Mr. Max Bertram, Area Counsellors of S.D. 69 who gave additional guidance in the composition of the first draft of the instrument.

The first draft of Section 1 of the questionnaire contained 39 items spread over the four categories which were to be answered using a computer analyzed form.

There were five versions of the questionnaire based upon the Grade 6 student survey. Grade 6 teachers and counsellors shared the same questionnaire format. The wording within the survey statements differed somewhat for each group so as to promote easy interpretation of the intent of each question. An example of such a wording change is:

Grade 6 **student** survey:
"When I went to Grade 6 I needed..."

Grade 6 **parent** survey:
"When **my child** went to Grade 6 **he/she** needed..."

At this point we remind the reader that throughout this study we are reporting the responses and comments from different groups

as they relate to the perceived Grade 6 student transition experience, not to the experiences of parents and teachers themselves.

In a Pilot Study in September 1984, the first draft was field-tested on eight Grade 6 students, five parents of Grade 5 students, five parents of Grade 6 students, and two Grade 5 teachers. After administering the questionnaire, interviews were conducted with the pilot respondees. This prompted some format changes and the inclusion of one new item resulting in the present 40-item questionnaire. (see Appendix B)

Each of the 40 statements involved two questions. Odd numbered questions asked the respondee to rate the Importance of the need stated while even numbered questions asked the respondee to rate the degree of Satisfaction with which the need was met. Hence 40 survey statements became a questionnaire containing 80 questions in Section 1 of the instrument.

Section 2 of the questionnaire is called Supplementary Open-Ended Items. The answers to these questions were to be written on the questionnaire pages. This second section contained items designed to uncover unanticipated needs, to allow the expression of respondees' feelings, and to seek opinions and suggestions. Grade 6 students and parents only were asked to rate the transition experience of the first month and then to explain the rating on the first page. The next two pages asked the same series of

questions to all respondee groups. For organizational purposes, the five definitive groups of surveys were coded by colour and number/letter. (e.g., 6s was Grade 6 students).

Further consultation with both Middle School Grade 6 teachers and administrators helped to produce the final edition of the open-ended question section. The project, using this instrument for the collection of data, received support from the District 69 Board of School Trustees at a Board Meeting in late September.

## Procedures for Sampling and Administration

### Grade 6 Students

A representative sampling of approximately 50% of the Grade 6 student body was chosen. Care was taken to make this a random sampling, approximating the existing proportion of Grade 6 boys and girls from each elementary feeder school in proportion to the number of Grade 6 students originating from these schools. This was accomplished in the following manner. Grade 6 class lists were obtained from each Middle School. Students were then coded for elementary school of origin and by sex. The selection process involved taking the name of every second student on the lists. This yielded the desired 50% of all Grade 6 students (one out of two students). A master list was compiled where student names were grouped under the elementary school of origin until all these schools had an equal percentage representation to that of the school's contribution to the total Grade 6 population. (i.e., If elementary school "x" had sent 30% of the present Grade 6 students to the Middle School, then it was determined that 30% of the Grade 6 sample would be students orginating from elementary school "x".)

On separate occasions, 55 Grade 6 students at Parksville Middle School and 62 at Qualicum Middle School sat for nearly one hour completing the questionnaire.

Careful oral instructions paired with written instructions on the questionnaire led the students into the actual form and computer (NCS) answer sheet. (see Appendix C) The students were observed to take considerable care in following instructions and completing the questionnaire as directed. One hundred and seventeen questionnaires were turned in. This represented a 100% return rate.

In addition to the regular sampling of Grade 6 students two Structured Interviews were held on two separate occasions to collect further information using a different procedure. A Grade 6 girl from a rural feeder school who had an average to above average record of achievement in elementary school and a boy from a larger town feeder school who had an average record of achievement were selected. Each student attended a different Middle School and each had had no prior experience with our Study or the instrument. The parents of these students were phoned and acquainted with the purpose of the Study. Permission was secured for participation and an after-school appointment was made. Each interview was completed with the student in a quiet neutral setting using the same instrument as in the regular administration. However the questions were asked by one of the authors and the student responded orally. The other author sat at another table making written observations. The interviews were recorded on audio tape. The author administering the questionnaire asked for clarification of some answers given,

taking care not to lead the student subject in making a response. (e.g., "Could you tell me more about that?") Additional written notes were made based on the information volunteered by the student. In this way it was hoped that the responses which had been collected would be further clarified following this procedure.

**Grade 6 Parents**

It was decided to survey a representative sample of Grade 6 parent households from each Middle School. These parents were, as far as possible, chosen by referral to the list of Grade 6 students who were not selected to complete the surveys so that in most cases the children of these parents had no prior exposure to our instrument. The surveys were mailed out with written instructions and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope. Approximately 45% were completed and returned within the specified time. A phoning campaign yielded another 19% producing a return rate of 64% from these Grade 6 parents. This represented 25% of the entire population of Grade 6 households in the District. Also this sample had near equal representation from each Middle School.

**Grade 5 Parents**

Fifty Grade 5 parents (25 from each zone) were selected. The sampling was taken both from rural and town feeder elementary schools. The Grade 5 parents of this sample were selected because they had not had any children who had yet attended any Middle School. They were "inexperienced" in this way. Their children

were going on to Grade 6 in one year's time.

It was decided not to survey Grade 5 students as it was felt that Grade 5s would not be sufficiently advanced into their last year of elementary school at the time of this needs assessment (October 1984) to be able to give the kind of meaningful information required by a study of this type. On the other hand it was felt that their parents would be able to conceptualize the transition needs of their children this far in advance of their actual admission (September 1985) to Middle School. These parents' pre-conceived attitudes were of interest to the authors. The initial return via stamped, self-addressed envelopes was approximately 50% from this group. An additional 24% were yielded after phoning. This produced a 74% return for this group of 50 parents of Grade 5 students and represented 15% of all Grade 5 households in the District.

**Grade 5 and 6 Teachers and Counsellors**

Meetings were held with Middle School administrators which helped to procure agreement from Grade 6 teachers and counsellors to contribute to the information being collected by the project. Nine Grade 6 teachers and four counsellors (two area counsellors and two in-school counsellors) were hand-delivered the questionnaires and all were returned. In the same manner 11 elementary Grade 5 teachers also returned questionnaires producing a 100% response from these groups.

## Analysis of Data

### Quantitative Data

The authors, in consultation with computer programming staff at the University of Victoria, developed the instrument so that the first section could be scored using a (NCS) coded answer sheet. Once collected, this data was then submitted to Computer Services with an outline of the desired statistics which were necessary to produce the **Results Section, Part A,** of this report.

### Qualitative Data

The second section of the instrument presented questions intended to elicit written reponses from all subject groups. The authors analyzed these responses which formed a substantial amount of written data in the following manner. All responses for each question were cut into separate slips and a "card sort" (Modified Delphi technique) was performed so that responses were grouped by similarity of theme and meaning. These groups of comments were then filed and the most clearly stated examples were then recorded as actual quotations under each question heading. This was done for each group of respondents. This forms the data base for the **Results Section, Part B,** of our report.

## Results and Discussion

### PART A - Quantitative Analysis

#### Importance of Needs

**Grade 6 Students**

It would appear that many of the needs for transition that we have identified with our instrument were seen as **Very Important.** What follows is a ranking of the most frequently rated of these needs (ranking one to ten). Each is followed by the item number and the category to which it belongs:

1. to know how to get caught up if I got behind in my school work. (#37) Academic
2. to know a teacher I could talk to if I was confused about something. (#65) Personal
3. to know what would happen if I broke a rule. (#7) Routines
4. to know how I would be treated by the Grade 7's and Grade 8's. (#53) Social
5. to know how to find my classrooms and my way around the school. (#3) Routines
6. to know how to make my own decisions instead of following "the crowd." (#59) Social
7. to know how to get my books and supplies ready for different classes. (#9) Routines
8. to know the school rules. (#5) Routines
9. to know how to prepare a written report. (#23) Academic
10. to know how to study well. (#27) Academic

Table 1 displays these and other needs that were frequently rated Very Important by the Grade 6 students. It is noteworthy that the majority of these needs fall into the Routine and Academic Need categories and decrease in importance toward Social and Personal Need categories.

One should also note that while some needs do not appear in Table 1 as frequently rated Very Important, they none the less were frequently rated Important. Most evident here are:

(#11) to know how to act in different teachers classes. Routine
(Important 47.9% and Very Important 41.9%)

(#41) to have information about the electives program. Academic
(Important 48.7% and Very Important 41.9%)

(#67) to know how to make new friends. Personal
(Important 47.0% and Very Important 40.0%)

(#69) to know who the counsellors were and what I could ask them about. Personal
(Important 46.8% and Very Important 38.7%)

The reader is referred to Appendix A for a more detailed examination of these results for Grade 6 students.

Table 1

The Percentage Response of Needs Most Frequently Rated Very Important

(by each Group)

| | | Students | Parents | | Teachers | | Counsellors |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Gr6 | Gr6 | Gr5 | Gr6 | Gr5 | |
| Student Need | No. of Respondents | 117 | 64 | 37 | 9 | 11 | 4 |
| ROUTINES | | | | | | | |
| TO KNOW: | | | | | | | |
| 3 | how to find classrooms, way around school | 57.8 | 50.0 | 59.5 | 44.4 | 45.5 | 50.0 |
| 5 | the school rules | 55.2 | 63.9 | 66.7 | 44.4 | 27.3 | 100.0 |
| 7 | what would happen if I broke a rule | 60.9 | 57.4 | 62.2 | 22.2 | 18.2 | 75.0 |
| 9 | how to get books, supplies ready for class | 56.9 | 48.3 | 63.9 | 44.4 | 36.4 | 75.0 |
| ACADEMIC | | | | | | | |
| TO KNOW: | | | | | | | |
| 21 | how to use Library for doing projects | 36.8 | 61.9 | 61.1 | 55.6 | 45.5 | 25.0 |
| 23 | how to prepare a written report | 54.7 | 65.6 | 73.0 | 22.2 | 36.4 | 0.0 |
| 27 | how to study well | 52.6 | 76.7 | 88.9 | 55.6 | 63.6 | 75.0 |
| 33 | how to get extra help from my teachers | 47.4 | 66.1 | 58.3 | 33.3 | 36.4 | 50.0 |
| 35 | how to get learning assistance if needed | 37.7 | 60.0 | 59.5 | 22.2 | 18.2 | 66.7 |
| 37 | how to get caught up in my school work | 72.4 | 58.6 | 58.3 | 44.4 | 27.3 | 75.0 |
| SOCIAL | | | | | | | |
| 47 | to feel welcomed by the rest of school | 44.7 | 55.9 | 51.4 | 44.4 | 63.6 | 50.0 |
| 53 | to know how I'd be treated by Gr. 7s & 8s | 58.3 | 36.7 | 25.7 | 0.0 | 18.2 | 50.0 |
| 59 | to know how to make own decisions | 57.0 | 77.6 | 80.6 | 44.4 | 70.0 | 100.0 |
| PERSONAL | | | | | | | |
| 65 | to know a teacher to talk to if confused | 61.2 | 70.7 | 85.7 | 44.4 | 36.4 | 100.0 |
| 75 | who to talk to if problem with other student | 49.1 | 62.5 | 63.9 | 44.4 | 27.3 | 50.0 |
| 77 | to learn more about my responsibilities | 50.9 | 45.3 | 47.2 | 66.7 | 36.4 | 75.0 |



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**Grade 6 Parents**

Grade 6 parents differed on their ranking of the ten needs most frequently rated **Very Important.** This group chose the following:

1. to know how to make my own decisions instead of following "the crowd." (#59) Social (students ranked this 6)
2. to know how to study well. (#27) Academic (students ranked this 10)
3. to know a teacher that I could talk to if I was confused about something. (#65) Personal (students ranked this 2)
4. to know how to get extra help from my teachers. (#33) Academic (students ranked this 13)
5. to know how to prepare a written report. (#23) Academic (students ranked this 9)
6. to know the school rules. (#5) Routines (students ranked this 8)
7. to know who I could talk to if I had a problem with another student. (#75) Personal (students ranked this 12)
8. to know how to use the library for doing projects. (#21) Academic (students ranked this 16)
9. to know how to get learning assistance if I needed it. (#35) Academic (students ranked this 15)
10. to know how to get caught up if I got behind in my school work. (#37) Academic (students ranked this as 1)

Most of the above items are from the **Academic** category.

Again the reader is referred to Table 1 for all other Needs frequently rated as being Very Important or to Appendix A for a detailed study of all the frequencies.

When examining Appendix A it is interesting to combine the ratings of Important and Very Important. The Grade 6 parents rated many more of the need items in this "range of importance" when compared to Grade 6 student responses. This might indicate a greater awareness of the importance of all of these needs for transition to the adjustment and success of their children in the new school. On the other hand some might argue that it indicates an over-concern on the part of these parents of new "middle schoolers". We mention this only to suggest that there is a difference in perceived needs between the Grade 6 parent and the Grade 6 student groups.

Grade 5 Parents

On examination of Table 1, the most notable comment about the results for Grade 5 parents is that these people responded similarly to Grade 6 parents on the perceived importance of the stated needs. They did perhaps indicate in the higher percentages shown in Table 1, a perception of importance for these items in slightly greater magnitude than for those shown by the Grade 6 parents. The ten highest ranked needs for Grade 5 parents were as follows:

1. to know how to study well. (#27) Academic
2. to know a teacher that I could talk to if I was confused about something. (#65) Personal
3. to know how to make my own decisions instead of following "the crowd." (#59) Social
4. to know how to prepare a written report. (#23) Academic
5. to know the school rules. (#5) Routines
6. to know who the counsellors were and what I could ask them about for help. (#69) Personal
7. to know how to get my books and supplies ready for different classes. (#9) Routines and to know who I could talk to if I had a problem with another student. (#75) Personal
8. to know what would happen if I broke a rule. (#7) Routines
9. to know how to use the library for doing projects. (#21) Academic
10. to know how to get learning assistance if I needed it. (#35) Academic

**Grade 6 Students, Grade 6 Parents, and Grade 5 Parents: A Comparison**

When comparing these three groups several dissimilar results occur.

On item #21 (to know how to use the library for doing projects), 36.8% of Grade 6 students saw this as Very Important while 61.9% of Grade 6 parents rated it this way, as did 61.1% of Grade 5 parents.

On item #27 (to know how to study well), 52.6% of students saw this as Very Important, while 76.7% of Grade 6 parents and 88.9% of Grade 5 parents rated it as such.

While on item #53 (to know how I would be treated by the Grade 7s and 8s), 58.3% of students rated this as a Very Important need, but only 36.7% of Grade 6 parents and 25.7% of Grade 5 parents, saw this as Very Important.

Significant differences in these ratings are evident in other items as well. Item numbers 23, 33, 35, 59, and 65 are all worthy of notice in Table 1.

A detailed study of Table 1 yields further differences of opinion among groups and this seems to be pervasive enough to carefully consider when examining this data. It should be noted that percentages above report only the Very Important rating. After combining Important and Very Important many of the groups are seen to exhibit less of a difference in opinion.

**Grade 6 Teachers, Grade 5 Teachers, and Counsellors**

Again the examination of frequencies shown in Table 1, together with attention to the Summary of Frequencies (see Appendix A), will provide further information to the inquisitive reader. Since our main focus has been on the students and parents who form the major consumer group of Transition programs we will only briefly consider results for these other three groups of respondents. One thing to bear in mind when reflecting on these percentages is the size of the groups. They are quite small with Grade 6 teachers having 9 respondents, Grade 5 teachers having 11, and Counsellors having only 4 respondents. This would tend to give the responses of any one member of these groups much more of an influence on the final percentages than would be the case in the student and parent groups, which had more members.

One difference that does appear when looking at the Summary of Frequencies (Appendix A) involves Grade 5 teachers. This group rated more needs as Not Important with a higher frequency than did the Grade 6 teachers and counsellors. These results provide cause to ponder. They may also provoke a mild surprise from some readers. This finding will be discussed in later parts of this report.

**Needs Rated Not Important**

The most significant comment we wish to make about Table 2 is that it demonstrates how few items presented in this study concerning possible needs of new middle schoolers seem to be perceived as having no importance.

The only real divergence in these results is in item #13, (to know what I could do in my spare time at lunch). This was rated as **Not Important** by Grade 6 students with a frequency of 47.9%. However, only 7.9% of Grade 6 parents and 8.3% of Grade 5 parents saw this as Not Important to their children. Many students seemed to know what to do with themselves during lunch period while members of other groups felt quite differently about this.

It should be mentioned that while these needs listed in Table 2 received the most frequent ratings of **Not Important** this does tend to overlook one aspect of the overall picture. Further referral to Appendix A shows many groups close to a split decision on the relative importance or unimportance of some items. Item #13, (to know what I could do in my spare time at lunch) is again an example where 47.9% of students responded Not Important but 40.2% responded Important and 12.0% Very Important. This produces a cumulative result of 52.2% of students who responded in this "range of importance" and it reveals a 47.9% to 52.2% split on unimportance as compared to importance.

This example once again makes it clear that frequent referral to Appendix A is useful as it affords an undiminished view of what is contained in the whole of our Results.

Table 2

The Percentage Response of Needs Most Frequently Rated Not Important

(by each Group)

| | Students | Parents | | Teachers | | Counsellors |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Gr6 | Gr6 | Gr5 | Gr6 | Gr5 | |
| Student Need No. of Respondents | 117 | 64 | 37 | 9 | 11 | 4 |
| **ROUTINES** | | | | | | |
| TO KNOW: | | | | | | |
| 13 what I could do in my spare time at lunch | 47.9 | 7.9 | 8.3 | 11.1 | 27.3 | 0.0 |
| **ACADEMIC** | | | | | | |
| TO KNOW: | | | | | | |
| 31 if there is a student who could help me with school work | 38.5 | 41.7 | 32.4 | 22.2 | 63.6 | 25.0 |
| **SOCIAL** | | | | | | |
| 45 to have a chance to meet my teachers before the first day of school | 41.0 | 46.7 | 56.8 | 66.7 | 45.5 | 75.0 |
| 61 to have a chance to meet the Grade 7 and 8 teachers | 45.2 | 45.8 | 48.6 | 66.7 | 81.8 | 66.7 |
| **PERSONAL** (None) | | | | | | |

**Perceived Satisfaction of Needs**

Table 3 presents those Needs which were most frequently rated as being Very Satisfactorily met.

For the first three groups of respondents (Grade 6 students, Grade 6 parents, and Grade 5 parents) several results are notable.

First of all when compared to the magnitudes of percentages in Table 1 for Importance of Need we find that the percentages in Table 3 are generally lower. Where Table 1 exhibits many frequencies in the 50% to 70% range, Table 3 contains percentages that are mostly well under the 50% range.

The percentage responses showing satisfaction from the Grade 6 parents are all lower than those from the Grade 6 students themselves, and some by as much as 25% to 30% for these items. It should be noted here that both the Grade 5 and Grade 6 parents had the option to respond with "I don't know" in their survey, whereas the Students did not have this option. This may have exerted some effect on these lower percentages in the Very Satisfactorily met category.

A look at Appendix A however demonstrates that when the response of Satisfactory is taken into account along with the Very Satisfactory responses of Grade 5 and 6 parents, there is more overall satisfaction shown than Table 3 demonstrates. In fact, there is somewhat more of an indication of a "range of satisfaction" coming from these parents than can be seen coming from the Grade 6 students. The reader should again refer to the Summary of Frequencies in Appendix A to appreciate this.

Table 3

The Percentage Response of Needs Most Frequently Rated Very Satisfactorily Met (by each Group)

| | | Students | Parents | | Teachers | | Counsellors |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Gr6 | Gr6 | Gr5 | Gr6 | Gr5 | |
| Student Need | No. of Respondents | 117 | 64 | 37 | 9 | 11 | 4 |
| **ROUTINES** | | | | | | | |
| TO KNOW: | | | | | | | |
| 5 | the school rules | 43.5 | 32.2 | 30.8 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 66.7 |
| 7 | what would happen if I broke a rule | 38.9 | 27.3 | 40.0 | 11.1 | 28.6 | 50.0 |
| **ACADEMIC** | | | | | | | |
| TO KNOW: | | | | | | | |
| 21 | how to use Library for doing projects | 39.3 | 14.9 | 20.8 | 11.1 | 14.3 | 50.0 |
| 29 | what we would be expected to do in P.E. | 37.1 | 17.0 | 10.0 | 11.1 | 16.7 | 0.0 |
| 41 | information about the electives program | 40.5 | 31.0 | 45.5 | 22.2 | 72.7 | 50.0 |
| **SOCIAL** (None) | | | | | | | |
| **PERSONAL** | | | | | | | |
| TO KNOW: | | | | | | | |
| 65 | a teacher to talk to if I was confused | 37.4 | 14.0 | 42.9 | 11.1 | 25.0 | 33.3 |
| 75 | who to talk to if problem with other students | 34.8 | 18.2 | 31.8 | 22.2 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| 77 | to learn more about my responsibilities | 41.2 | 12.0 | 29.2 | 11.1 | 11.1 | 25.0 |


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With only a few exceptions, the Grade 5 parents responses exhibit greater overall (expected) satisfaction than those for Grade 6 parents when both of these possible responses of Satisfactory and Very Satisfactory are considered. The Grade 5 parents' greater (expected) satisfaction is also demonstrated by the low percentage responses in Table 4, which contains needs that were frequently rated Not Satisfactorily met.

It should be noted that some needs listed in Table 4 were rated by most groups as having much higher importance than other needs. These 'more important' needs are perhaps more notable than the needs of lesser importance in Table 4. These more significant unsatisfactorily met needs (that were also rated as Important) in Table 4 are items #27 (how to study well), #35 (how to get learning assistance if needed), and #53 (how I'd be treated by Grade 7s and Grade 8s).

It may be noted that Grade 6 teachers generally exhibited less satisfaction than Grade 5 teachers and counsellors. This can be seen by reflection upon the results for these groups in both Table 3 and 4 and Appendix A, where Grade 5 teachers rated many more needs as being Satisfactorily met than did their colleagues teaching Grade 6.

In summary it would appear that on the whole, Grade 6 students and Grade 6 teachers show up in our data with more needs being perceived as unsatisfactorily met than the other groups surveyed.

Table 4

The Percentage Response of Needs Most Frequently Rated Not Satisfactorily Met (by each Group)

| | | Students | Parents | | Teachers | | Counsellors |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Gr6 | Gr6 | Gr5 | Gr6 | Gr5 | |
| Student Need | No. of Respondents | 117 | 64 | 37 | 9 | 11 | 4 |
| ROUTINES (None) | | | | | | | |
| ACADEMIC | | | | | | | |
| TO KNOW: | | | | | | | |
| 27 how to study well | | 25.6 | 42.3 | 23.8 | 55.6 | 14.3 | 33.3 |
| 31 if there is a student who could help me with school work | | 52.2 | 48.5. | 6.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 |
| 35 how to get learning assistance if needed | | 45.3 | 31.1 | 18.2 | 33.3 | 25.0 | 0.0 |
| SOCIAL | | | | | | | |
| 45 to have a chance to meet my teachers before the first day of school | | 54.8 | 30.4 | 20.0 | 22.2 | 37.5 | 0.0 |
| 53 how I'd be treated by Grade 7s & 8s | | 27.2 | 46.7 | 15.0 | 33.3 | 11.1 | 0.0 |
| 61 to have a chance to meet the Gr. 7 & 8 teachers | | 50.9 | 16.2 | 11.1 | 33.3 | 20.0 | 0.0 |
| PERSONAL (None) | | | | | | | |



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Grade 6 parents show the next highest ratings of unmet needs. Grade 5 parents and teachers show more of the needs being rated in the range of satisfaction. The results for counsellors show a greater overall perception of needs being met. Where Routine needs are most frequently rated as satisfactorily met by all groups, Academic and to some extent Personal and Social needs were more frequently rated less than satisfactorily met. It should be remembered that Routines here include those needs traditionally related to standard orientation programs (e.g., finding one's way to the classroom).

Results for teachers and counsellors must be viewed with the reservation that these groups had much smaller numbers of respondents in them.

Finally Table 5 shows the items containing needs to which Grade 6 parents most frequently responded with the answer, "I don't know." This indicates where these parents had a lack of knowledge for what help was available (if any) to Grade 6 students in meeting those needs. It should be noted that these percentage responses are not very high. They are included simply so that these needs may be examined with the knowledge that some parents were not able to say how well certain needs were being met. Item #76 (to know who they could talk to if they had a problem with another student) is probably the most notable with 31.3% of Grade 6 parents answering this way.

Table 5

The Percentage Response of Needs Most Frequently Rated "I Don't Know" for Help Received with Important Needs

| | Student Need | [a]Percentage Response |
|---|---|---|
| 35 | to know how to get learning assistance if they needed it | 23.4 |
| 37 | to know how to get caught up if they got behind in their school work | 21.9 |
| 53 | to know how they would be treated by the Grade 7s and 8s | 23.4 |
| 59 | to know how to make their own decisions instead of following "the crowd" | 23.4 |
| 65 | to know a teacher that they could talk to if they were confused about something | 21.9 |
| 75 | to know who they could talk to if they had a problem with another student | 31.3 |
| 77 | to learn more about their responsibilities at school | 20.3 |

[a]Responses given are for Grade 6 parents only

**Analysis of Variance for Grade 6 Students by Sex**

One other difference in response is worthy of mention. In a one-way analysis of variance performed on the data for Grade 6 students on the average help received for needs, the response from female students compared to male students shows a difference in two categories.

In the category of Routines the difference is significant. The significance of F (where anything less than .05 is significant) is .013. The mean for females (1.15517) is higher demonstrating more satisfaction with the meeting of needs than was expressed by the male (.98870) part of the sample.

In the Academic category F is marginally significant at .067. The mean for females (1.07692) was higher than for the male part (.94654) of the Grade 6 student sample. Again the females seem to be demonstrating more satisfaction with the way their needs have been provided for in the present transition process.

**Figures 1 and 2**

**Figure 1** clearly shows in graphic form a picture of the way all groups perceived the needs for transition of Grade 6 students.

In Figure 1 the clear lower portion of each bar indicates the percentage of the respondent group who rated the Need category **Important**. The patterned upper portion of the bar indicates the percentage who rated the Need category **Very Important**. Each bar therefore represents a continuum of Need Importance for each category by group.

The same format is used for **Figure 2** which rated the Need Satisfaction for each category by group.

At least 73.6% of all groups show a perception that each category of Need is quite Important and some are more important than others.

The average percentage response for all groups by category are as follows:

Importance

| | |
|---|---|
| **Routine needs** | **87.1%** |
| **Academic needs** | **87.0%** |
| **Social needs** | **78.9%** |
| **Personal needs** | **93.7%** |

For the **Quantitative Results only** indications were that on the average for all groups Personal needs, Routine and Academic Needs, and lastly Social needs seemed to be important in that order.

Figure 1

Comparison of Average Responses (%) by Group

Indicating the Degree of Importance of Student Needs

(by Category of Need)

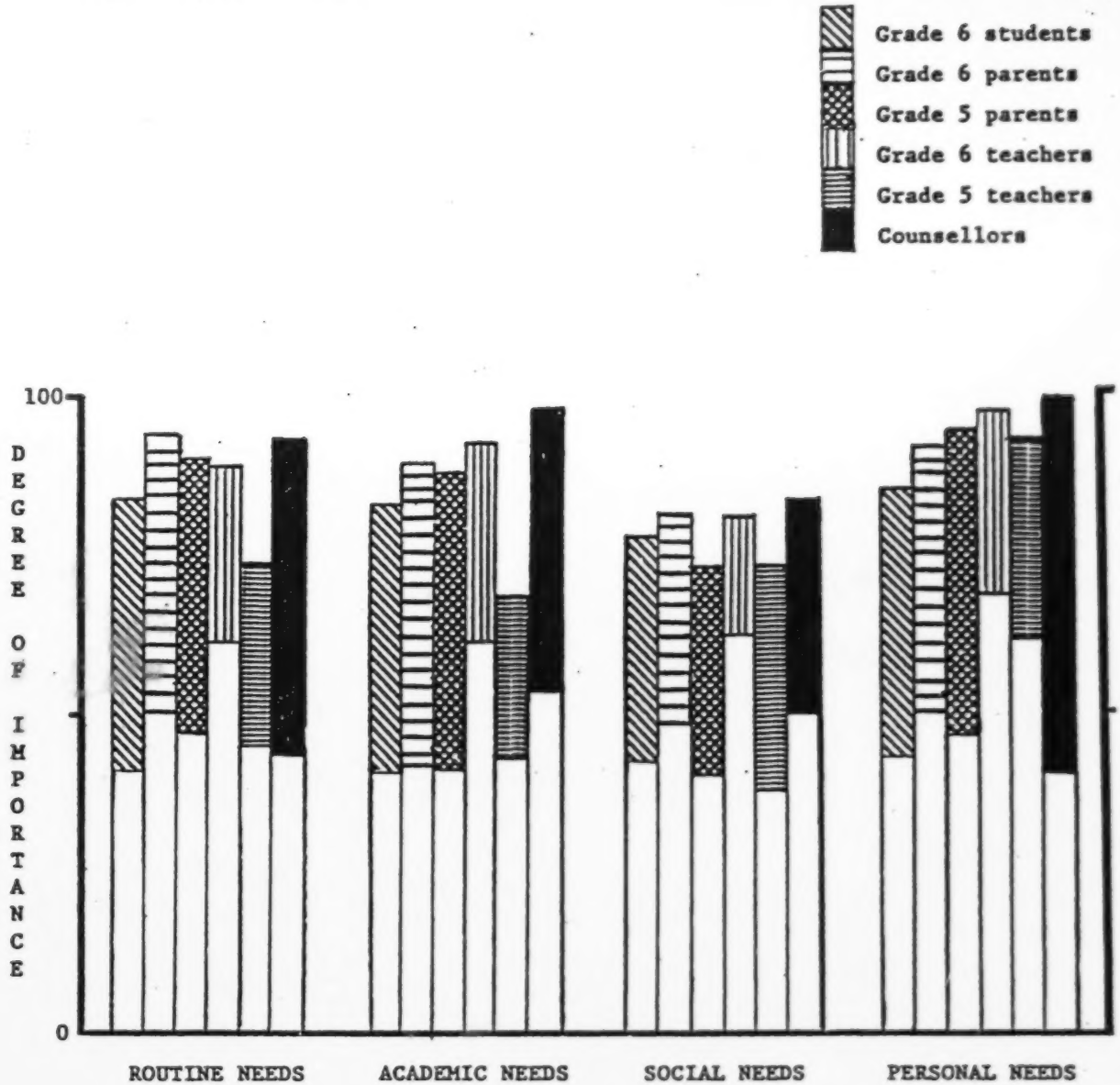


Figure 2 graphically shows a comparison of the way all response groups see the degree to which needs are being met. At least 79.5% of all groups show a perception that each category of Need is Satisfactorily met.

The average percentage response for all groups are:

Satisfaction

| | |
|---|---|
| Routine needs | 85.0% |
| Academic needs | 81.5% |
| Social need | 79.5% |
| Personal | 80.9% |

This indicates that on the average for all groups, Needs are seen to be met with Routines most satisfactorily met. Closely grouped behind Routines are Academic, Personal, and Social needs in that order.

It would appear that group average percentage responses to Importance and Satisfaction correspond closely in Routines (87.1% and 85.0%) and Social (78.9% and 79.5%) Needs categories while Academic needs were rated important by 87.0% and rated Satisfactorily Met by 81.5%. Personal needs differed most significantly with 93.7% rating them Important and 80.9% rating them Satisfactorily Met when comparing Figures 1 and 2.

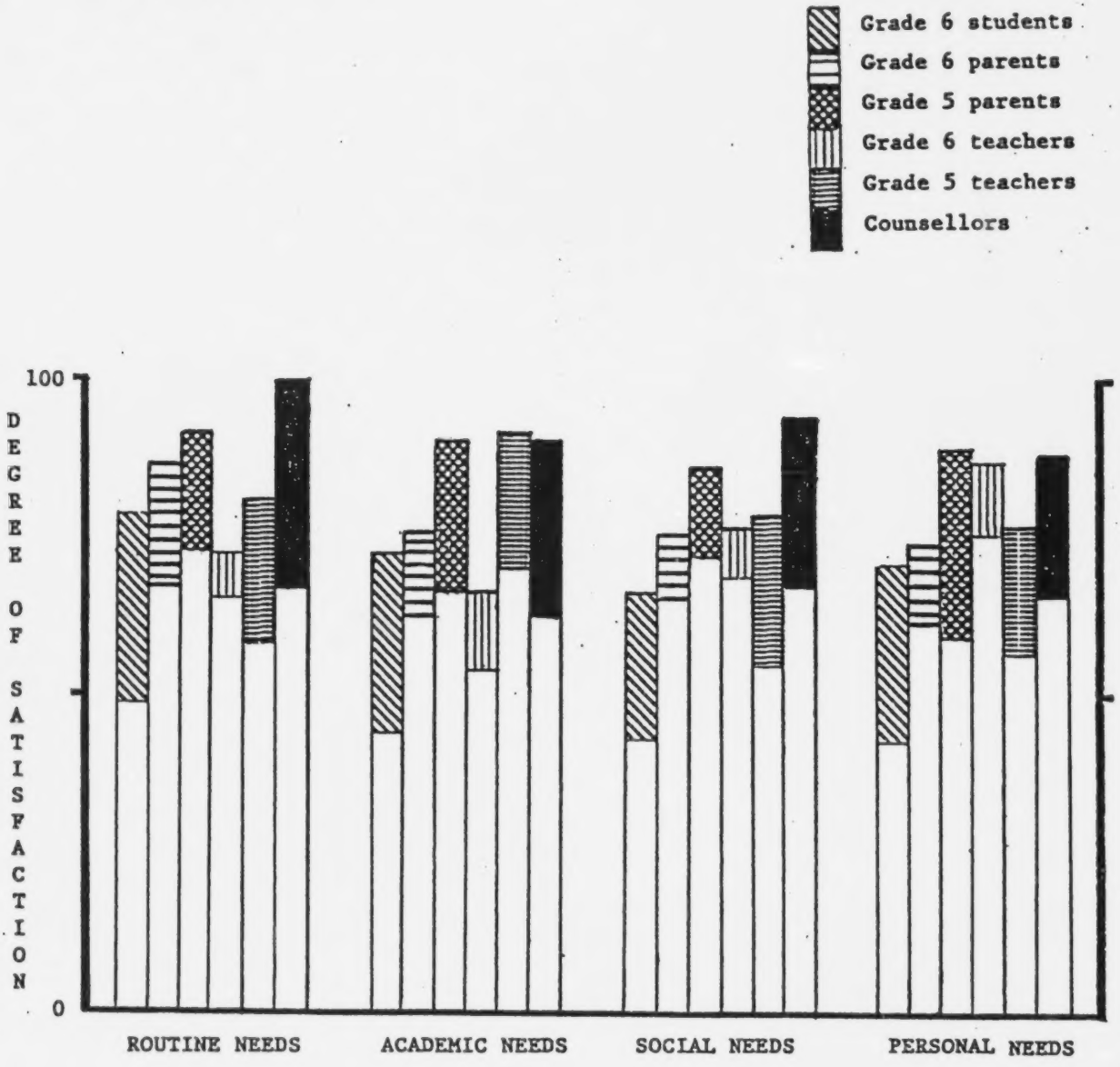
The percentages used in these graphs were calculated from percentages generated by computer analysis and shown in Summary of Frequencies (Appendix A).

Figure 2

Comparison of Average Responses (%) by Group

Indicating the Degree to Which Needs are Being Met

(by Category of Need)



This completes the reporting of Part A the Quantitative Results from our study. What follows is a reporting of Part B the Qualitative Results. Our intention is to build onto what we have already reported with additional information and to begin to clarify Part A of the Results.

PART B - Qualitative Analysis

The following is a presentation of results based upon the written responses to the Second Section, Supplementary Open-Ended Items, of the questionnaire. The analysis presents a selection of the comments made by each group of respondents following the organization of the questionnaire.

Comments cited are those which in the judgement of the authors best describe the prevalent ideas and sentiments of respondents. They are reported as they appeared on the answer sheets. The only alterations made were the occasional addition of words to make some comments clearer. These additions are identifiable by their inclusion inside square brackets [] as is the accepted practice. Care has been taken not to alter the meaning of any comment.

Question I:

In answering the first question of the open-ended section (other things that students need to help them get ready for Grade 6) many of the students themselves offered answers which closely matched some items that were already contained in the first section of our questionnaire. We will not repeat these here.

Other answers offered by the Grade 6 students concerned knowing what school supplies would be needed, time to practice the opening and use of their lockers, and the possibility of 'initiation' by older students.

Some samples would be:

> [I needed] a note outside the door telling us what supplies we needed.
>
> Someone told me to watch out for initiation day.

Again Grade 6 parents responded in large part by naming needs already contained in section one of the questionnaire. Some novel responses include:

> [My child needed] accurate supply lists.
>
> a joint orientation of parents and students.
>
> [to know] how to get along in large groups.

Grade 5 parents spoke about the need for information about transition, for ways that their children could learn to cope with older students, and the need for support from the home. This is evident in statements like:

> [My child needs] to know in advance that transition can be a good experience.
>
> facts on drugs, smoking, and drinking.
>
> to learn to handle frustrations with other students.
>
> to be taught how not to be intimidated or conned by older students.
>
> for his parents to feel more positive about Middle School.

Grade 5 teachers frequently mentioned the belief that present programs adequately prepared their students for the Middle School. Other needs mentioned were the learning of necessary organizational skills and the need for parent support of the Middle Schools.

Examples are:

learning to have the necessary books from their lockers.
more parental support of Middle Schools.
less Middle School 'bashing' by parents.

Grade 6 teachers and the counsellors' responses are considered together as these groups both work closely together at the Middle School itself. They echo the same need for parental involvement and support for the Middle School. One example was:

parent involvement, awareness and cooperation.

Question II:

The second question was concerned with transition during the first month of Grade 6 in Middle School. "What was the first month of Middle School like for you?" was to be rated on a Likert Scale of 1 to 5 with "Not Good" being 1 and 2, "O.K." being 3, "Good" being 4 and 5.

Grade 6 students rated their first month at Middle School as follows:

15 (or 12.8%) rated it as 1 and 2 (Not Good)
49 (or 32.5%) rated it as 3 (O.K.)
64 (or 54.7%) rated it as 4 and 5 (Good)

Besides rating the first month experience, students were asked to comment on Why they had rated it so. Responses under the Good rating often suggested a surprised feeling that the

Grade 7s and 8s were not as formidable as expected, such as:

People said the Grade 7s and 8s would bug me.
I got to know some 7s and 8s. They were nice.

Other pleasant experiences involved associations with teachers like:

The teachers were real helpful.
I got a nice teacher.

The challenge and excitement of new programs impressed some students, shown by remarks like:

I liked electives.
It was exciting and sometimes scary.
I learned a lot.

Of the small percentage of dissatisfied students, most expressed worry about older students such as in the following examples:

I was afraid someone might beat me up.
I was being pushed around by Grade 8s.
Some people push and trip me.

Grade 6 parents were the only other group asked to rate their perceptions of how the first month was for their children. Sixty out of 64 responses received showed the following breakdown:

14 (or 23.3%) rated it as 1 and 2 (Not Good)
18 (or 30.0%) rated it as 3 (O.K.)
28 (or 46.7%) rated it as 4 and 5 (Good)

Grade 6 parents who were generally satisfied with the first month gave reasons similar to those of the students, like:

> [He was] excited by the challenge.
>
> [She was] enthusiastic about meeting new teachers and students.
>
> Electives.

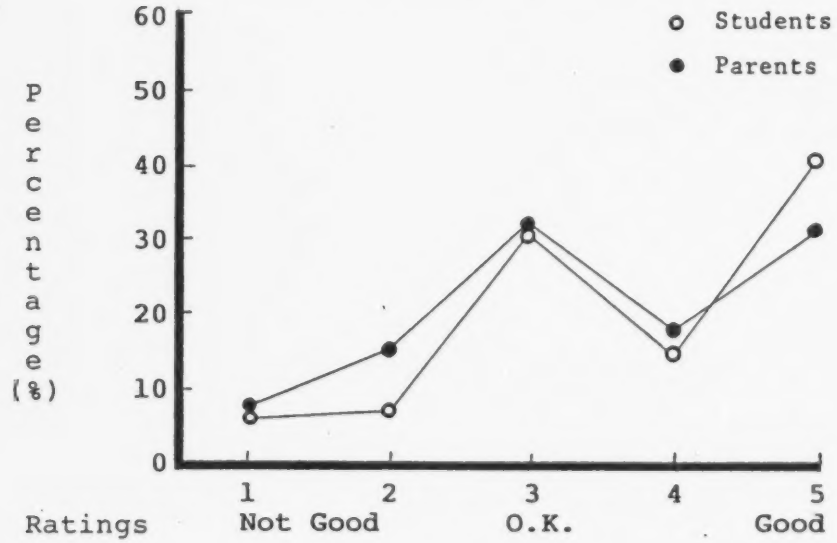
Parents dissatisfied with their child's first month at Middle School expressed a wider variety of reasons including:

> [He had a] hard time adjusting to new teachers.
>
> [She was] finding rules unfair at times.
>
> [She was] very tired due to [the] ridiculous bus schedule.
>
> [The] amount of homework he had the first two weeks.
>
> [It was] all too much to cope with.

Figure 3

Overall Impression of First Month of Middle School

(Grade 6 Students and Parents)



If we look at the ratings indicating O.K. or better, 87.2% of students and 76.7% of parents indicated satisfaction with the first month's transition experience. The parent group appeared less satisfied than were the students in their perceptions of the experience.

Question A:

Question A asks the respondents to list "three things you like about being at the Middle School." Many of the same kind of responses came from the Grade 6 students that had been expressed in the answers to Question II. Some of these were:

Teachers help you along.
I like electives.
I like changing classes.
I like cooking nummy things.
Having my own locker.
More things to do.
We have a bigger gym.
There is more freedom.
We have choices and more responsibility.
Dances.
Teachers respect you.
Meeting new people.

Grade 6 parents issued a wide variety of reasons for being pleased about their children being at Middle School.
Some of the more pleased parents wrote:

Having different teachers.
Great homeroom teacher.
Better P.E. program.

[She has found] new friends from all over the district.

[There is] a more realistic and competitive attitude toward education.

It gets her ready for high school.

It provides a chance to socialize with older children.

More opportunities to pursue areas of interest.

Academic challenge.

It has kept her interest in school keen.

Grade 5 parents focussed more upon the social advantages for wanting their children to attend Middle School. However, one commented that:

Some children are too young for this major transition.

Other comments included:

A feeling of greater independence and responsibility.

A broader scope of learning opportunities--more specialized teachers.

[They] learn how to socialize better.

[It helps them] to make the transition from elementary school to high school and from childhood to that of a young adult.

A chance to meet a wider variety of people.

Grade 5 teachers commented mostly upon the social and personal advantages offered by the Middle School organization for Grade 6 students:

New friends.

Ability to mix with different students.

Electives expand their interests.

Broader outlook on the community.

More extra-curricular activities.
More responsibility and independence.
Exposure to different styles of teaching.

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors saw Grade 6 students bringing vitality to the school as well as the Middle School offering more for the student. Things the students brought were:

Good work habits.
Cooperation.
Their enthusiasm.

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors felt that the school developed the child in the following ways:

Speaking skills.
They learn independence.
Opportunity to try electives.
Firm structured program.
Many students blossom due to a fresh start.

Question B-1:

Question B-1 asks the question, How is Grade 6 different from Grade 5 in school subjects? Grade 6 students saw the grades very similar in some ways and different in others. It must be remembered that this questionnaire was answered after one month of Middle School so the experience from this group is limited. Examples of representative answers are:

More responsibilities.
Better and more fun.
Different classes and subjects.

Electives.
We're in school longer.
Work is a bit harder.
Work is easy for now.
It's the same.

Grade 6 parents saw dramatic differences between elementary school Grade 5 and Middle School Grade 6. Their comments seemed to be mostly concerned with a larger and heavier workload. Some statements showing these concerns were:

Focus on subjects is more intense.
Lab tests in Science.
More responsibility.
More research.
Timetable system.
More competition.
More sophisticated work.

Isolated comments such as these are difficult to categorize as positive or negative in attitude. Two of the more easily categorized comments are:

Homework expectations are a greater challenge, sometimes too much.
They are learning many new things

Grade 5 parents thought their children would be experiencing:

More intense, diversified and detailed learning concepts.
More teachers and different methods.
Class changes and a timetable to deal with.
Teachers are less personally interested in students.

More homework and an increased challenge.

More emphasis on responsibility.

Faster pace and more written reports.

Grade 5 teachers thought that in Grade 6 there would be:

More content.

More diversity in subject areas.

Wider variety of electives.

Emphasis on more specialized subjects.

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors felt similarly about question B-1. They said that:

Subjects are more difficult.

There were higher expectations, a need for independent work habits.

More long term assignments.

More specialist teachers.

More responsibility expected of and given to students.

Question B-2:

The Grade 6 students listed mostly school physical characterisitics as the differences they saw between Grade 5 and 6 outside of class. Some wrote:

Lockers, stairs, no playground equipment.

Gymnasium, two floors high.

More kids, bigger kids.

More freedom to walk wherever.

You can go to town for lunch.

"Funner."

No different.

Grade 6 parents on the other hand expressed a wide range of social and personal concerns as being the major outside-of-class differences between Grades 5 and 6. Their comments run as follows:

Less structure, sometimes at a loss for what to do.
More freedom to fool around.
Different people to contend with.
Children try to grow up too quickly.
Negative influence of older kids.
Hopefully, more sports and clubs to keep them interested.
Children feel less secure.

Grade 5 parents had similar concerns illustrated by statements like:

New social groups form.
More peer pressure from older kids.
Less protection from teachers.
Opportunity to get involved in extra-curricular activities.

Grade 5 teachers saw the students having:

More freedom.
Responsibility for lockers, books, timetable.
More people to deal with.
Social peer pressure.
Greater social opportunity.
Older students present a different style of behaviour.
Horrible ride to school on the bus.

This group seems to view the social contact in a more positive light than the previous two parent groups as indicated by a comparison of their responses. By way of giving an example, instead

of a "negative influence" (Grade 6 parents), the older students present a "different style of behaviour."

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors mentioned a student need for:

More responsibility and self-discipline.

They warned of:

Grade 7 and 8 peer pressure

and cited:

a lack of suitable playground equipment and activities for Grade 6 students' energy.

Question C-1:

Question C-1 asks the respondent to name some things that were hard to get used to at Middle School in school subjects. Besides some naming specific subjects that they had trouble with, Grade 6 students mentioned difficulties with organizational tasks and higher teacher expectations. Some examples of such statements are:

Not as much time to complete work.
Homework.
Harder work.
Remembering all my things from my locker.
Not enough eating time.
Remembering when things are due.
Changing classes all the time.

Grade 6 parents also listed several specific subjects their children had difficulty with. The following were also "hard things" to get used to:

Not as quiet in the classroom.
Homework volume increased over last year.
Faster pace of work.
Different classes and different teacher expectations.
Lack of time between class changes.
Challenges for excellence not as great.

Grade 5 parents thought the things that their children would find hard to get used to in class would be:

Having different teachers.
Preparing in advance for different classes.
General confusion.
Different homework expectations.
Greater amounts of work.
Using study time effectively.
Having to write reports.
Working on her own.
Dealing with more discipline.

None of the Grade 5 teachers made comments in response to this question.

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors felt that students found it hard to get used to the following:

Organization, time management, and study skills.
Remembering homework.
Lengthy periods.
Pacing of work.

Question C-2:

Outside of class, things hard to get used to for Grade 6 students were:

Longer bus ride.
New rules.
Lockers.
Football.
More kids to watch out for.
Finding my way to class.
Being the youngest in the school.

Grade 6 parents felt that their children found it hard to get used to:

Intimidation by older students.
Feeling of not being a part of the school.
Nothing to do at recess or lunch.
Bus line-ups and long ride home.
Volume of children in hallways.

Grade 5 parents expressed concerns about the length of the day for their children. Besides the time factor, social interactions were described as something their children would have trouble getting used to. Examples of these are:

Coping with time schedules.
Taking the bus.
Getting up earlier.
What to do at lunch hour.
Being around older kids.
More complex social structure.
More regimentation.
Less personal environment.

None of the Grade 5 teachers made comments in response to this question.

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors noted the following things that are hard for Grade 6 students to get used to outside of class:

Peer pressure.
Locks and locker organization.
New school rules.
Crowded hallways.
Coping with teasing.
Getting along with and acting appropriately in front of Grade 7s and 8s.

Question D:

What things done in Grade 6 are the same as those done in Grade 5? was the question that received the fewest responses. Many respondents wrote

"I don't know."

A few parents stated that they thought that:

"It is a silly question"

Nevertheless, there were some informative responses, some of which follow.

Grade 6 students wrote:

Rules.
Lunch hour games.
Most subjects.
You have the same teacher for quite a few subjects.

Grade 6 parents wrote:

Subjects.
Homeroom.
Time to socialize.
Similar rules but better laid out.
Nothing!

Grade 5 parents wrote:

Opportunity to help in the school.
Subjects.
Rules.
Learning responsibility.

Grade 5 teachers wrote:

Research and homework assignments.
Emphasis on original work.
Quizzes, projects, hands on.
Core subject areas.
Strive for excellence in work habits.
Stress on responsible behaviour.

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors listed:

Similar French program.
Usually with one teacher.
Elementary philosophy and approach to teaching.
Academic drills, tests, etc.
Work habit expectations.

Question E:

A great many Grade 6 students answered question E (What did the elementary school do to get you ready for Middle School?) mainly by naming components of the present orientation activities carried on my Middle School personnel each spring. Examples were:

Some students showed us around the Middle School.

A tour.

Held discussions.

Showed us a film about it.

Brought some people to our class to talk to us.

There was the occasional response that did not fall into this category:

Gave us lots of homework.

[Teachers] talked to us about it.

Many Grade 6 parents also answered this question by mentioning components of spring orientation. Other comments were varied:

Taught them to research, write reports and use the library.

Not enough.

Had a wonderful graduation ceremony.

[Students] talked with the counsellor in classes about personal safety, etc.

Grade 5 parents seemed to have some different and more varied answers to this same question. Of particular note were:

> Give children more responsibility and a little authority.
>
> Teach [them] to meet deadlines and complete assignments, develop better work habits.
>
> Train [them] in rules and discipline.
>
> Teach them awareness of approaching maturity.
>
> [I] don't know.

In a similar vein as those mentioned by other groups there appear:

> [Teach them] to use the library for completing work, and expect homework.
>
> [Arrange for] a visit to Middle School before the end of Grade 5.
>
> Invite the principal and counsellors to meet the Grade 5s.

Grade 5 teachers working in the elementary school system provided more informed answers:

> [Provide] assertiveness training through counsellor.
>
> Middle School visit.
>
> Discuss student concerns.
>
> Explain how Grade 5 curriculum relates to Grade 6.
>
> Begin homework assignments.
>
> Teach responsibility through work habits and class meetings.

Finally, Grade 6 teachers and counsellors comment further on some activities already in place. Some worth mentioning were:

Established work habits.
Worked with other teachers on class lists.
Grade 5 and 6 teachers meet.
Area counsellor programs (assertiveness training).

Question F:

Grade 6 students seemed to respond to this question (What did the Middle School do to get you ready for coming to Grade 6?) by remembering several different activities from recent experience:

The Grade 6s wrote us a letter.
Explained the rules.
Tour.
Gave us a list of things to bring.
Showed us the locks.
Band students came and showed us their instruments.
Gave us review work.

Grade 6 parents were generally quite congratulatory toward Middle School efforts in their responses to this question. Some examples indicated an awareness of important orientation activities carried on in the school district:

She really appreciated the letter from the Grade 6 student -- a lovely touch.

Excellent help from the Middle School administrators on their visit.

Posted class lists.

Project Help was valuable.

Vice-principal spoke on the acceptable behaviour code.

Student handbook was excellent.

Grade 5 parents generally indicated little prior knowledge of what Middle Schools do to get Grade 5 students ready. This is not too surprising as most activities do not begin until the springtime and these parents were being surveyed in early October. A few characteristic responses were:

Invite parents to view the school.

Invite the Grade 5s to visit Grade 6 classrooms.

[I] don't know.

Grade 5 teachers were numerous in their commentaries. Some remarks were:

Arrange to meet Grade 5 teachers.

Exchange records.

Arrange for a parents' meeting at the elementary schools.

Project Help and letters from Grade 6s.

Meet the Middle School day!

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors echoed many activities mentioned already by the Grade 5 teachers. Examples were:

Hold coffee parties for Grade 5 parents at each elementary school.

Meet the Teacher night.

Question G:

In answer to this question (What could elementary schools do to get you ready for Middle School?) Grade 6 students yielded some interesting ideas. Some examples of novel suggestions included:

> Give us a little bit of electives at the end of the [Grade 5] year.
>
> Get us prepared for changing classes in Grade 5.
>
> Have a day like they do at the Middle School.
>
> Give us a chance to meet our Grade 6 teachers.
>
> Give us some Grade 6 work for the last two weeks.
>
> Give us more homework and lockers.
>
> Let us stay at the Middle School for a day and do every subject.

Grade 6 parents differed from the students in their types of suggestions. Some of these seem to fall more into the social area:

> Make the Grade 5s aware that they are going from 'king of the roost' to 'bottom of the pile'.
>
> Counsel kids on reacting to each other.
>
> Keep them at elementary school for another year to further prepare them for the demands of Middle School.
>
> Increase interaction between schools at all levels.

Other comments fall into the area of academics:

> Increase the length of assignments.
>
> More homework of a relevant nature.
>
> Set up a full day at the Middle School.

Still other parents felt that the present programs were enough, as the following comments clearly show:

Everything was done.

Quite adequate and effective.

Grade 5 parents were generous in their suggestions:

Give the students study skills for the more difficult studies.

Encourage students to be interested in what they're doing.

Tell us their plans for Transition.

Let parents know what the changes will be [for their children].

Give learning assistance for learning difficulties.

Constantly communicate information about the Middle School.

Get a Grade 6 student to take a Grade 5 under his wing for a day.

Teach a standard for behaviour.

Teach greater self-discipline.

Some comments from Grade 5 parents betrayed a lack of knowledge about present programs. Examples were:

Take them on a tour of Middle School.

Visit the Middle School for special classes.

Grade 5 teachers spoke of increased communication and interaction among all schools. This was mentioned often in answers like:

More liaison between elementary and Middle [Schools].

Increase curriculum orientation.

Increase interaction at student and teacher level.

Compare philosophical expectations with Grade 5 and 6 teachers.

More interschool sports for feeder schools.

Other ideas were:

Attempt to instill self-motivation.

Instill responsible attitudes toward behaviour.

Still others seemed to express a satisfaction with the status quo, for example:

Just what they are doing--there is only so much that you can do!

Continue orientation.

**Grade 6 teachers** and **counsellors** spoke of the need to be better prepared academically and organizationally, as with:

Give them more independent work.

Teach them to be organized.

Practice preparing for a class.

Make them more aware of academic requirements.

Other remarks were:

Arrange for a meeting of Grade 5 and 6 teachers.

Help get rid of the poor image of the Middle School.

Question H:

In response to this item (What could the Middle School do to get you ready for coming to Grade 6?) many of the Grade 6 student answers focus on adjustments during the first few weeks, for example:

Have a tour the first day.

Send out maps of the school.

Show us where to go the first day.

Make you feel welcome--have a party!

Introduce us to the teachers.

Other responses included:

Do what they did for parents' night.

Explain the subjects more carefully.

I don't know.

On the other hand, Grade 6 parents expressed ideas that focus on easing the social adjustment of the new students. Some statements reflecting this were:

Provide opportunity for students to meet next year's teacher.

Impose penalties on older students for hazing.

Promote a more cooperative, friendly and helpful system between grades, such as the house system.

Open the school a day before school starts so that students can walk around.

Grade 6 teachers could talk to students in class meeting format.

Let students spend a day with their next year's teacher at the Middle School.

Have the Grade 6s prepare a presentation about Grade 6 and present it to the Grade 5s.

Arrange more than one tour.

Grade 5 parents mentioned several ideas in their remarks, some of these having been already suggested in other parts of the questionnaire. Examples are:

Meeting with Middle School teachers before school begins.

Explain to older kids their part in welcoming new students and that younger ones need encouragement.

Be prepared to counsel them if needed.

Invite the Grade 5s to special after-school activities.

Other remarks were:

De-institutionalize--they are still children!

Invite the Middle School teachers to elementary assemblies throughout the year.

Offer tours.

Discuss school expectations.

Offer help when they are scared.

Children should already have been briefed.

[Offer a] Buddy system--older student with a Grade 6'er for a few days.

Grade 5 teachers mentioned only a few suggestions and these were:

Grade 5 visits to Middle Schools should happen several times.

Clear communication between Grade 5 and Grade 6 teachers.

Let the Grade 5 teachers know what Middle School expects in preparedness.

Just what they are doing.

Grade 6 teachers and counsellors echoed remarks already made by previously cited groups. For example:

Regular discussions with elementary schools.

Buddy system for Grade 5s on their tour, (with a Grade 6 student).

Split tour groups into smaller groups.

Other comments were:

More student contact between elementary schools.

Give student handbooks to Grade 5s.

It is being done (e.g., Project Help).

Two groups (Grade 6 parents and teachers) received questionnaires with additional questions.

The first asked respondents to indicate by a check mark whether the efforts of school personnel had been successful in placing students in an appropriate learning environment.

Of the Grade 6 parents asked,

52 indicated the answer "Yes", while
4 indicated the answer "No";
8 parents made no response.

Of the Grade 6 teachers asked this question,

7 answered "Yes" and
2 did not respond to the question.

The other question asked Grade 6 parents if they had ever attended an orientation meeting at the Middle School.

Of the Grade 6 parents asked this question,

48 responded with "Yes",
14 with "No", and
2 made no response to this question.

**Summary of Results (Part A and Part B)**

Generally, after looking at the Results thus far it would appear that **Routine** needs and **Academic** needs were considered by most groups to be of most importance. **Social** and **Personal** needs followed closely in importance for most groups except the Grade 6 students.

In suggesting other things necessary to the adjustment of Grade 6 students both groups of **parents** mentioned that more information about the Transition process/experience itself was desirable. They also wished they could obtain more help for their children with social issues related to the larger groups of new students and to the older students present at the Middle School.

**Teachers** generally seemed to want their students to arrive at the Middle School with some organizational skills (e.g., use of the locker) and desired greater parental support for and involvement with the Middle School.

In indicating what the first month of Middle School was like **Grade 6 students** generally rated their experience (using a Likert scale) as having been slightly more positive than what **Grade 6 parents** did in rating their child's experience (Question II). The positive factors which seemed to most influence these ratings were the chance to have Elective subjects (such as Home Economics) and the chance to meet a variety of new students and teachers. The negative factors were the daily bus rides and the introduction to a new system of rules and discipline including the Grade 6 students' experiences with older students.

When the classroom experience is considered, the required adjustment seems to be greatest for Grade 6 students in the area of meeting deadlines, remembering things needed, and changing classrooms for certain subjects. Parents indicated that their children needed to adjust to the faster pace of school, the increased homework, the volume of work, dealing with discipline, and changing classrooms. Teachers perceived the greatest adjustments being required of the students in organizational skills, pacing of their schoolwork, meeting deadlines, and coping with more lengthy periods of study.

In the out-of-classroom realm, students named the longer bus rides, the new rules, the use of lockers, and being the youngest in a more populated school environment as aspects they found hardest to get used to. Parents named intimidation by older students, lining up for the bus as well as the bus ride itself, the new time schedule, and the increased number of children (in the hallway) giving rise to a less personal environment as the chief adjustment issues for the new student. Teachers saw the main issues as those of coping with new organization (lockers and rules), the activity in the hallways, peer pressure, and getting along with older students.

Finally, it would seem that all groups generally agreed that the 'newness', variety, and increased opportunities were what was best about attending the Middle School. Students, parents

and teachers alike saw the new challenges, new facilities, and variety of teachers and programs, as most positive. Students also appeared to relish new freedoms, while parents could see the school as preparation for high school. Teachers expected their students' chief gains would be the learning of new and greater responsibilities and the greater opportunity to socialize with many more students of their own age.

PART C - Structured Interviews

During the course of these two interviews the students involved gave answers that help to supply more information about their reasons for making particular responses to Section 1 of the questionnaire. Obviously this was not possible to do with all other students in the mass administration. It is hoped that this information will shed further light on the needs of all Grade 6 students and suggest ways that these needs may be better met.

The names of the two student subjects have been changed to ensure their anonymity.

The specific responses that each of these students made to the first section of the questionnaire are included at the end of each interview for easy reference.

## Interview Summaries

### Interview One

### "Tina"

Tina came to her Middle School from a small rural feeder school. She arrived with a record of slightly above average achievement and was described by her Grade 5 teacher as a neat and conscientious student.

When Tina's responses to the first section of the questionnaire are compared to the average responses for Grade 6 students some interesting differences occur. Her ratings of the Importance and Satisfaction of Needs were well below the average in all four categories.

In the Routines section Tina indicated that when she entered the new school on the first day no one was present to guide the new Grade 6s to their classrooms. She also mentioned that she had no idea what would happen that day. By chance another student whom she knew helped her to find her homeroom but this was not planned ahead of time.

Knowing what would happen if she broke a rule was important to her but she was not told in advance what these consequences would be. She said that she learned by observing others who themselves broke a rule and found out then what the consequences were. They and she had learned by experience.

The help that she received in getting books and supplies ready for classes was very satisfactory and she credited her homeroom teacher with this help. A list of what she would need for the classes was written on the blackboard for the first few weeks of school.

In the area of Academic needs reference to the specific responses Tina made (see the end of this Summary) will show her expressed needs together with the help she felt was given. It may be noted that several needs were rated as having unsatisfactory help given. One comment was made that in the need area of preparing written reports she felt that this was unimportant because this sort of assignment had not yet been required of her at the time of the interview.

In the category of Social needs Tina rated the needs in such a way as to suggest that they were of little concern to her. All but one of these was rated as Not Important. Help given was mostly satisfactory.

Having had the chance to talk with some of her friends the first day was important because it helped her to feel less "nervous." She said that she expected the older students to be "sort of rough" because other students as early as her Grade 5 tour had told her this. Her homeroom teacher had also mentioned it in the first week of school further reinforcing what the students had said.

In the Personal needs category many of the needs were rated as Not Important.

Tina felt that she could talk to the principal or her teacher if she was confused about something or if she had a problem with another student. She did not yet know who the counsellors were. She said that she had friends at the school who cared about what she thought and so this need was satisfied in that way. Her friends were members of her church group.

She rated her first month at the Middle School as a 4 on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was a rating of Not Good and 5 was Good. She mentioned that "better, nicer behaviour from the Grade 7s and 8s" would have helped to make her rating higher.

The difficulties of having to be prepared for classes, using her locker, and getting used to the older students were mentioned.

When asked what the Middle School had done to help her get ready for Grade 6 she mentioned her homeroom teacher: "It's not too bad now. [My teacher] is nice." Asked what the school could have done she said that it would have helped if someone had been there the first day to meet her at the bus and show her where her homeroom was. Having more time after dismissal to get to the bus was also mentioned. She said that the buses were fine now that she had gotten used to them.

Tina said that she was excited the first day of school and had maintained this feeling through her first few weeks. It was better now though that she knew some more of the other students and teachers.

* ROUTINES

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | A | (B) | C | to know what happens the first day of school. | 2 | (A) | B | C |
| 3 | A | (B) | C | to know how to find my classrooms and my way around the school. | 4 | (A) | B | C |
| 5 | A | B | (C) | to know the school rules. | 6 | A | (B) | C |
| 7 | A | B | (C) | to know what would happen if I broke a rule. | 8 | (A) | B | C |
| 9 | A | (B) | C | to know how to get my books and supplies ready for different classes. | 10 | A | B | (C) |
| 11 | A | (B) | C | to know how to act in different teachers' classes. | 12 | A | (B) | C |
| 13 | (A) | B | C | to know what I could do in my spare time at lunch. | 14 | A | (B) | C |
| 15 | (A) | B | C | to know about the Student's Council and what it could do for me. | 16 | A | (B) | C |
| 17 | (A) | B | C | to know what I could see the principal or vice principal about. | 18 | A | (B) | C |

"Tina"

| | The need is: | | | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | | | NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
| 19 | (A) | B | C | to know how much school work I would have for each subject. | 20 | A | (B) | C |
| 21 | A | (B) | C | to know how to use the Library for doing projects. | 22 | (A) | B | C |
| 23 | (A) | B | C | to know how to prepare a written report. | 24 | A | (B) | C |
| 25 | A | (B) | C | to know how my teachers would mark my work. | 26 | (A) | B | C |
| 27 | A | (B) | C | to know how to study well. | 28 | (A) | B | C |
| 29 | (A) | B | C | to know what we would be expected to do in Physical Education. | 30 | A | (B) | C |
| 31 | (A) | B | C | to know if there is a student who could help me with school work. | 32 | A | (B) | C |
| 33 | A | (B) | C | to know how to get extra help from my teachers. | 34 | (A) | B | C |
| 35 | A | B | (C) | to know how to get learning assistance if I needed it. | 36 | (A) | B | C |
| 37 | A | (B) | C | to know how to get caught up if I got behind in my school work. | 38 | A | (B) | C |
| 39 | A | (B) | C | to know how I will be graded by different subject teachers. | 40 | A | (B) | C |
| 41 | A | (B) | C | to have information about the electives program. | 42 | A | (B) | C |
| 43 | (A) | B | C | to know how much homework I will get. | 44 | (A) | B | C |

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 45 | (A) | B | C | to have a chance to meet my teachers before the first day of school. | 46 | (A) | B | C |
| 47 | (A) | B | C | to feel welcomed by the rest of the school. | 48 | A | (B) | C |
| 49 | A | (B) | C | to have a chance to talk with some of my friends during the first day. | 50 | A | (B) | C |
| 51 | (A) | B | C | to have ways to get to know some of the other grade six students. | 52 | A | (B) | C |
| 53 | (A) | B | C | to know how I would be treated by the Grade 7's and Grade 8's. | 54 | A | (B) | C |
| 55 | (A) | B | C | to know what clubs and sports I could join at school. | 56 | A | (B) | C |
| 57 | (A) | B | C | to know more about special school events, like dances. | 58 | A | (B) | C |
| 59 | (A) | B | C | to know how to make my own decisions instead of following "the crowd". | 60 | A | (B) | C |
| 61 | (A) | B | C | to have a chance to meet the Grade 7 and 8 teachers. | 62 | (A) | B | C |

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 63 | (A) | B | C | to be given the chance to help out in the school in some way. | 64 | A | (B) | C |
| 65 | A | (B) | C | to know a teacher that I could talk to if I was confused about something. | 66 | A | (B) | C |
| 67 | (A) | B | C | to know how to make new friends. | 68 | (A) | B | C |
| 69 | (A) | B | C | to know who the counsellors were and what I could ask them about for help. | 70 | (A) | B | C |
| 71 | (A) | B | C | to meet another student who would give me some help if I needed it. | 72 | (A) | B | C |
| 73 | (A) | B | C | to meet a helpful person who would notice me and care about what I thought | 74 | A | (B) | C |
| 75 | A | (B) | C | to know who I could talk to if I had a problem with another student. | 76 | A | (B) | C |
| 77 | (A) | B | C | to learn more about my responsibilities at school. | 78 | A | (B) | C |
| 79 | (A) | B | C | to be able to meet and talk with someone about how I was getting along. | 80 | (A) | B | C |

**Interview Two**

**"Barry"**

Barry arrived at his Middle School from a larger town-centred feeder school. He had an average record of achievement and was described by a teacher as a responsible student with good work habits.

When Barry's responses to the first section of the questionnaire are compared to the average Grade 6 student response, his ratings for the Importance and Satisfaction of Needs were slightly below the average. The only exception here was in the Personal category where his ratings for both Importance and Satisfaction were slightly higher than the average.

In the area of Routines Barry commented that most of these needs were Important. He was unsatisfied with the help he had received in knowing what to do with his time at lunch and knowing how to act in different teachers' classes. To know what he could see the principal or vice principal about was rated Very Important and Very Satisfactorily met, the help being provided by his homeroom teacher here. Several of his needs were met through the help provided by his older sister who attended the Middle School and by his mother.

In the Academic category Barry rated five of the needs as Not Important and five as Very Important. Most of the help he had received here was from his teachers. Knowing if there was

a student who could help him with his work was rated as unmet. He commented that this would have been important for him if he had needed the help but that this had not been the case. It was the same with knowing how to get extra help from his teachers. He commented that he had received the preparation he needed in writing a report in elementary school.

Barry felt that feeling welcomed by the rest of the school, having a chance to talk to friends the first day of school and having ways to get to know the other Grade 6s were all Very Important Social needs. He said that most of these needs had been met because many of his friends from Grade 5 were in his Grade 6 classroom.

He also felt that knowing how he would be treated by the Grades 7s and 8s was very important. He clarified this by saying that he had known some of these students previously and that it had not been "the greatest relationship." He had worried about this during the first few weeks and rated the help received as not satisfactory ("I didn't get any.") He had dealt with this fear by distancing himself from these particular students at school. ("I tried to forget that they were there and nothing happened...nothing happened.") Four of the nine needs in the Social category were rated Not Important. These may be seen by referring to the copy of Barry's responses at the end of this Summary.

In the Personal category Barry knew who the counsellors were and felt he could approach them if he needed to. He felt that if he had wanted to contact a student who could help him he would not have known how. He saw this as a valid need as the teachers were "too busy" to do so. He would have also preferred this to be a student that was his own age and not older.

One thing he felt he needed to help him get ready for the first week was an accurate and complete supply list. He was given one before leaving Grade 5 but found upon coming to Grade 6 that his teacher required several additional things.

In rating his first month at the Middle School on the 5-point scale, Barry gave it a 3 (O.K.) He enjoyed "getting together with my friends" and said that he knew he would be "one of the littlest ones there, but nothing happened." He acknowledged that he had worried about the older students and claimed that they had held "initiation" the second day of school. ("We didn't know what they'd do!")

Barry was happy about having more things to do at lunch and liked moving to different classes but expressed some difficulty in getting used to the crowded hallways, short period changes, and being one of the smallest students.

The elementary school could have better prepared him for Grade 6, he said, by allowing more movement between classes and giving him more than one subject teacher while he was in Grade 5. The Middle School could have held more tours of the new school,

told him more about the use of lockers and made maps of the Middle School more available to him when he arrived. ("Maybe put a map in a central place.") He also thought that they could have told the older kids "to leave the Grade 6s alone." Barry explained that he didn't know what bus to take the first week and where to get on it. When he did locate the bus and lined up the older students came along and "pushed you out of the line."

Two very enjoyable experiences for Barry were the special noon time and after school clubs, as well as simply playing outside with his friends at recess.

* ROUTINES

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | (A) | B | C | to know what happens the first day of school. | 2 | (A) | B | C |
| 3 | A | B | (C) | to know how to find my classrooms and my way around the school. | 4 | A | (B) | C |
| 5 | A | (B) | C | to know the school rules. | 6 | A | (B) | C |
| 7 | A | B | (C) | to know what would happen if I broke a rule. | 8 | A | (B) | C |
| 9 | A | (B) | C | to know how to get my books and supplies ready for different classes. | 10 | A | (B) | C |
| 11 | A | (B) | C | to know how to act in different teachers' classes. | 12 | (A) | B | C |
| 13 | A | (B) | C | to know what I could do in my spare time at lunch. | 14 | (A) | B | C |
| 15 | (A) | B | C | to know about the Student's Council and what it could do for me. | 16 | A | (B) | C |
| 17 | A | B | (C) | to know what I could see the principal or vice principal about. | 18 | A | B | (C) |

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19 | A | B | **C** | to know how much school work I would have for each subject. | 20 | A | **B** | C |
| 21 | A | **B** | C | to know how to use the Library for doing projects. | 22 | A | **B** | C |
| 23 | **A** | B | C | to know how to prepare a written report. | 24 | A | B | **C** |
| 25 | A | B | **C** | to know how my teachers would mark my work. | 26 | A | B | **C** |
| 27 | A | **B** | C | to know how to study well. | 28 | A | **B** | C |
| 29 | **A** | B | C | to know what we would be expected to do in Physical Education. | 30 | A | **B** | C |
| 31 | **A** | B | C | to know if there is a student who could help me with school work. | 32 | **A** | B | C |
| 33 | A | **B** | C | to know how to get extra help from my teachers. | 34 | **A** | B | C |
| 35 | **A** | B | C | to know how to get learning assistance if I needed it. | 36 | A | B | **C** |
| 37 | **A** | B | C | to know how to get caught up if I got behind in my school work. | 38 | A | B | **C** |
| 39 | A | B | **C** | to know how I will be graded by different subject teachers. | 40 | A | **B** | C |
| 41 | A | B | **C** | to have information about the electives program. | 42 | A | **B** | C |
| 43 | A | B | **C** | to know how much homework I will get. | 44 | A | **B** | C |

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 45 | (A) | B | C | to have a chance to meet my teachers before the first day of school. | 46 | A | (B) | C |
| 47 | A | B | (C) | to feel welcomed by the rest of the school. | 48 | A | (B) | C |
| 49 | A | B | (C) | to have a chance to talk with some of my friends during the first day. | 50 | A | B | (C) |
| 51 | A | B | (C) | to have ways to get to know some of the other grade six students. | 52 | A | (B) | C |
| 53 | A | B | (C) | to know how I would be treated by the Grade 7's and Grade 8's. | 54 | (A) | B | C |
| 55 | A | (B) | C | to know what clubs and sports I could join at school. | 56 | A | (B) | C |
| 57 | (A) | B | C | to know more about special school events, like dances. | 58 | A | (B) | C |
| 59 | (A) | B | C | to know how to make my own decisions instead of following "the crowd". | 60 | (A) | B | C |
| 61 | (A) | B | C | to have a chance to meet the Grade 7 and 8 teachers. | 62 | (A) | B | C |

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 63 | (A) | B | C | to be given the chance to help out in the school in some way. | 64 | (A) | B | C |
| 65 | (A) | B | C | to know a teacher that I could talk to if I was confused about something. | 66 | A | B | (C) |
| 67 | A | B | (C) | to know how to make new friends. | 68 | A | B | (C) |
| 69 | A | B | (C) | to know who the counsellors were and what I could ask them about for help. | 70 | A | B | (C) |
| 71 | A | (B) | C | to meet another student who would give me some help if I needed it. | 72 | (A) | B | C |
| 73 | A | B | (C) | to meet a helpful person who would notice me and care about what I thought | 74 | (A) | B | C |
| 75 | A | B | (C) | to know who I could talk to if I had a problem with another student. | 76 | A | B | (C) |
| 77 | A | (B) | C | to learn more about my responsibilities at school. | 78 | A | (B) | C |
| 79 | A | B | (C) | to be able to meet and talk with someone about how I was getting along. | 80 | A | B | (C) |

## Qualifications of Results

### Evaluation of the Instrument

> Test reliability means that a test is consistent....Test unreliability creates instrumentation bias, a source of internal invalidity in an experiment. Before drawing any conclusions from an experiment, the reliability of the test instrument used...should be assessed. (Tuckman, 1978, pp. 160-161)

Cronbach's Alpha: During the Pilot phase a reliability analysis was performed on the first section of the instrument for each category of measurement we used (Routines, Academic, Social, and Personal). The test used was Cronbach's Alpha. The results were as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Routines - Need<br>Alpha = 0.6921 | Routines - Help<br>Alpha = 0.7474 |
| 2. | Academic - Need<br>Alpha = 0.7906 | Academic - Help<br>Alpha = 0.8130 |
| 3. | Social - Need<br>Alpha = 0.7248 | Social - Help<br>Alpha = 0.8236 |
| 4. | Personal - Need<br>Alpha = 0.7852 | Personal - Help<br>Alpha = 0.8886 |

These are measures of the Internal Consistency of the instrument and show reliability when they are closest to a value of 1.0. Less than 0.5 is considered a relatively weak value, whereas values of 0.7 and greater are considered to be more demonstrative of actual reliability.

The results of this test indicate that the instrument that we have designed and used for this study demonstrates a comfortable level of internal consistency of response by groups on each category of measurement. That is, all values for alpha are in the range of 0.7 or greater.

The reader who desires further information about this index of consistency should consult resources on research, looking under the heading Cronbach's Alpha. A related test of reliability would be the Kuder-Richardson formula.

## Possible Contaminating Factors

Great care was taken by the authors to preserve accuracy in conducting this study. However there are a number of possible contaminating factors that should be mentioned when considering the results. Three contributing factors of our survey grow out of our intentions to gather significantly large amounts of information from relatively large sample populations. These three factors were: the use of a computer scored answer sheet to collect responses to the first section of the survey; the lengthy survey which, according to observations, took most repondees approximately one hour to complete; and the seating arrangements that were necessary when administering the Grade 6 student questionnaire.

The possible contaminating factor of using the computer scored answer sheet exists if a respondent errs in transferring a mentally

calculated response from an item located on the question sheet over to a separate computer scored answer form. (see Appendix C) However, such an error would likely be caught by the respondent as he or she reached the end of a question section (as at #60 on the answer sheet) and began a new one. In the event of an error erasures cause a further possibility of contamination due to the computer misreading any messy responses that were not fully erased.

To counteract these possibilities, the authors searched through the completed forms and checked to make certain that any incomplete erasures were completely erased or responses too lightly marked on the computer forms were darkened.

The lengthy questionnaire could cause fatigue in certain individuals during the answering process. This may in turn, contribute to hurried or careless answers.

Grade 6 students were observed to remain conscientiously on task throughout each session. They seemed to exhibit a "test-writing" attitude which impressed the project coordinators. Parents and teachers were of course not observed while answering their questionnaires. It stands to reason that in some of these cases, during the approximate one hour needed to complete the task, certain at-home or at-school distractions may have interrupted the concentration of certain individuals. This possible contaminating factor could affect the quality of some returns. It is however impossible to control in an administration of this type.

The third factor arose because in the administration of the student questionnaire, it was necessary to arrange some of the students at tables in a fairly close seating arrangement. It is possible that some copying of ideas occurred for the open-ended questions. This would have been a feat most difficult to accomplish when working on the first computer scored section of the instrument. While the students worked, three teachers circulated among them, ensuring on-task activity and assisting some students having difficulty. In the opinion of the authors, this procedure ensured a minimum of copying or cross-student influence.

Finally, Tuckman (1978) speaks of "experimental mortality," referring to a "non-random loss of subjects from a random sample." (p. 237) He states that a certain portion of a sample who decide not to return their questionnaires, may form a valid sub-group with opinions important to the overall body of information collected. Tuckman suggests that efforts to cull information from such a group are necessary. To reduce this experimental mortality and preserve the validity of our Results, the authors instituted a phoning campaign which solicited more than the extra 10% of returns which Tuckman advocates. (p. 237)

We feel that despite our attempt to gather substantial amounts of information through a lengthy survey administered to a relatively large sample population, adequate care was taken to reduce or eliminate possible contaminations of the results. We are also

aware that some minor contamination will probably always take place. For this reason we have examined our results and reported them in a variety of ways. The use of statistical and anecdotal results as well as structured interview procedures make us feel confident that such a variety of approaches give credence to our data collection as well as to the conclusions and recommendations based on this data.

## Conclusions

### A. Importance of Needs

The results of this needs assessment present an abundance of information from which to draw conclusions. The first section of the survey in which respondent groups rated the importance of identified needs shows several interesting trends.

The **Personal needs** category was rated as the **most important** category by all groups except the Grade 6 parents (1.1% of Grade 6 parents rated Routine needs more important). The unanimity of this indication of the importance of Personal needs suggests that most groups, including the students themselves are concerned about individual adjustment within the new school setting.

The **Social needs** category was rated important the **least** amount by respondents in all groups except in the Grade 5 teacher group (4.4% of Grade 5 teachers rated Academic needs less important). This result seems surprising since a large number of the anecdotal comments fit into the description of Social concerns. Upon closer examination, it is discovered that these qualitative comments were concerned mostly with "resisting peer pressure." Examining Appendix A we find item #59, which relates to the same concern, rated Very Important by high percentages of most groups followed quite far behind in the ratings by the other needs in the Social category.

It appears then that in comparison, most of the needs listed in the Social category were not perceived as Very Important by most respondents. Item #59 (to know how to make my own decisions instead of following "the crowd") was of utmost importance. It is plausible that this need is of such overwhelming importance that the other Social needs pale in importance beside it.

Group differences show other trends worthy of remark. The Counsellors group rated the importance of all need categories higher than any other group. Two explanations may account for this. First, there were only four Grade 6 counsellors in the district and so in our sample which limited the chance of there being a great variance in point of view. Secondly, counsellors spend a good deal of their time working with orientation programs which address many of the needs encompassed by our Routine section, help students and teachers overcome Academic problems, as well as attend to Social and Personal needs of students in transition. The counsellors may well be expected to see all need categories as important when so many of their counselling efforts are put into meeting those needs.

At the other end of the spectrum, the lowest average percentage responses rating importance in the Routine, Academic, and Social need categories were made by the Grade 5 teachers. These teachers may feel that the Academic concerns of elementary school are the same as those of Middle School and therefore have been addressed

by the elementary school experience. It may also be that in the elementary situation the students, being familiar with one classroom teacher, exhibit little confusion about teacher expectations, relationships with others, or organization within their relatively stable environment. The elementary teachers may not appreciate the possible confusion that arises out of having to deal with more people as well as specialization and a different organization at the Middle School. Hence, for Grade 5 teachers, Routine, Academic, and Social needs may not appear to be of as great an importance to the students as other respondent groups see these needs.

The other groups (Grade 6 students, Grade 6 parents, Grade 5 parents and Grade 6 teachers) did vary somewhat in their average group ratings of importance, yet overall, it should be noted that many items within all four categories were rated as being important by these respondent groups. There are also very few items that were generally rated Not Important by more than one group. These findings would indicate that in general, all six respondent groups perceive many of these needs as important. Therefore it would seem that the school system is obliged to make continued efforts to address the needs of students in transition.

B. Satisfaction of Needs

When comparing different group ratings of levels of satisfaction (or how well the needs were perceived as being met) three respondent groups displayed fairly consistent satisfaction with most needs in all four categories.

Counsellors were most consistent in expressing satisfaction. Responses indicating unmet needs occurred in only seven items while all other items received a rating of satisfaction by all four counsellors. Although the group is a small one in number, the positive responses suggest that since counsellors invest so much time and effort in helping students meet these needs, they may tend to perceive their efforts as effective ones and so see student needs as satisfactorily met. Further, there was not an occurrence of total agreement on any needs rated as unmet, an event which would seem quite possible with only four respondents. In general, the counsellors seem to have a high regard for the importance of most needs in the four categories and have stated that in almost all instances those needs were perceived as being met.

Another group displaying a high degree of satisfaction with needs being met was the Grade 5 parents. It is noteworthy that this group expected unmet needs in only two important items: #59 (to know how to make their own decisions instead of following "the crowd") and #67 (to know how to make new friends). The Grade 5 parents expecting satisfaction for all other needs,

may suggest that they are also satisfied with what they know of transition programs. It may also indicate that members of this group were relatively confident of a successful transition for their own children. This optimistic attitude displayed by Grade 5 parents was not expected by the authors due to the considerable past controversy surrounding the Middle Schools.

The third group of respondents indicating general satisfaction with needs being met were the Grade 5 teachers. This is the same group of respondents who had rated significant numbers of items as Not Important.

Many items rated important were also rated as satisfactorily met by the Grade 5 teachers. This group seems confident that the students they will be passing on to Middle School will be well adjusted and well prepared for the transition to come. This confidence itself may have promoted a feeling of ease in meeting needs and acted in some ways to reduce the rating of importance of the needs listed. When asked what elementary school could do to improve transition, one Grade 5 teacher wrote, "just what they are doing."

The Grade 6 parents group was very positive in rating needs met in the Routine category. It would seem that most parents are satisfied with school efforts in this area of transition as such comments like "...excellent help from the Middle School administration" ... and ..."student handbook was excellent,"

appear. These parents were also generally satisfied with needs being met in the other categories although they did rate some needs in each of the Academic, Social, and Personal categories as being unsatisfactorily met. The most outstanding of these were items #53 (to know how they would be treated by the Grade 7s and Grade 8s) and #27 (to know how to study well) as these items were also rated high in importance by this group.

The two remaining respondent groups, Grade 6 students and Grade 6 teachers, seemed the least satisfied since they rated more needs as unmet than any of the other groups. Many of the needs rated unmet by the students however were also rated as not important. Only two needs were rated significantly high in importance as well as being rated unmet. These were items #23 (to know how to prepare a written report) and #59 (to know how to make my own decisions instead of following "the crowd") The "written report" may be an ominous event for which many Grade 6 students feel unprepared. This attitude may be a result of different teacher expectations of report writing procedures in Grade 6 and/or a lack of introductory research skills learned in previous years. For Grade 6 students, these two needs are worthy of consideration.

The Grade 6 teachers rated a large number of needs as being unmet many of which were also rated important. Routine needs worthy of note are items #5 (to know the school rules) and #7 (to know what would happen if they broke a rule). It appears

that Grade 6 teachers were concerned about these issues which are related to discipline.

This group is by far the least satisfied with Academic preparation. Two of the most important academic needs rated unmet and important by Grade 6 teachers were items #23 (to know how to prepare a written report) and #27 (to know how to study well). These needs being mentioned by Grade 6 teachers coupled with the two previously cited Routine needs may suggest a degree of frustration on the part of Grade 6 teachers. While dealing with the discipline issue surrounding "rules" teachers also have certain pressures to complete a curriculum for which some students may lack the necessary skills. When answering the question "What could elementary schools do to get them ready for Middle School?", typical Grade 6 teacher responses were "give them more independent work" and "Make them [the elementary schools] more aware of [Grade 6] academic requirements."

These teachers indicated that, though not high in importance, many Social needs were unsatisfactorily met for their students. There were no Personal needs rated as unmet to any significant degree.

A number of additional observations were made by the authors during the study and should be pointed out. First in the category of Routine needs and to a lesser extent in Academic needs, female Grade 6 students seemed to be significantly more satisfied with

help provided than were the Grade 6 males. The significance was shown in a one-way analysis of variance performed on the data. Some conjecture is required to explain this phenomenon. It is generally accepted that girls in the elementary grades are more attuned to what is taught than are boys. To follow the argument further, girls experiencing orientation programs may grasp more of what is provided than boys. The end result may be this higher rating by females of needs being met in Routine and Academic categories.

Secondly, there seems to be a pervasive student concern about knowing what to expect of the Grade 7s and 8s in the Middle School. Students said things like "...Grade 7s and 8s would bug me." Parents worried about "intimidation by older students." However there seemed to be more fear and concern about possible problems with older students than was evident in the reports from actual student experience in the first month of school. This conclusion is supported by student comments such as, "I got to know some 7s and 8s. They were nice." and "We didn't know what they'd do...[but] nothing happened." This is not to suggest that new students have never experienced difficulty with older students at Middle School.

Another common parent concern is the lengthy bus ride to and from school. Some students in outlying areas spend a long time on the bus before and after school. For some Grade 6

students, this produces a school day more than two hours longer than it was in Grade 5. This fact prompted many comments from parents, such as [children are] "very tired due to the ridiculous bus schedule."

From analyzing responses to question E and F (What did the elementary and middle schools do to prepare your child for coming to Grade 6?) in the second section of the questionnaire, it becomes apparent that many Grade 5 and 6 parents and some elementary school teachers demonstrated a lack of knowledge of several transition programs that already were in existence. Furthermore many from these groups responded by answering "I don't know" to items related to present transition programs in the first section of the questionnaire. These outcomes suggest a need for more communication between elementary and Middle School teachers and administrators as well as closer contact with the parents in the community.

Assuming that most facets of the transition process as measured by our instrument are important to all groups, the authors observed that various related groups have differences of opinion. For example, there is obvious disagreement between the Grade 5 teachers and the Grade 6 teachers when it comes to the academic preparation of students. Grade 5 teachers generally indicated

that their students are satisfactorily prepared while Grade 6 teachers were by far the least satisifed with the preparation of incoming Grade 6 students. This again shows that continuing articulation between elementary schools and Middle Schools is needed.

Another obvious related group difference existed between Grade 6 parents and Grade 5 parents where the latter group generally demonstrated that they were satisfied that their child's needs would be met while Grade 6 parents showed that they were consistently less satisfied with present efforts to meet Routine, Academic, Social, and Personal needs. While Grade 5 parent optimism is encouraging, one wonders if these perceptions will change as their children proceed through the period of transition to Grade 6.

Finally we should comment on the Grade 6 students who rated more needs as unsatisfactorily met than any other group except Grade 6 teachers. The students also rated fewer needs as important than most other groups. Once again one should carefully consider how much value can be placed on needs that were rated unmet and also rated unimportant. Certainly a rating of unimportance reduces the significance of a rating where needs were seen as unmet because, as one student explained, "It wasn't important so I didn't think carefully about [rating satisfaction on] those ones." Compared to other groups, especially counsellors, Grade 6 students saw much less importance of most needs.

Students did see the need in item #69 (to know who the counsellors are and what I could ask them about for help) as relatively important and relatively unsatisfactorily met. (All counsellors rated it as important and as satisfactorily met.) This indicates that a certain body of students are not being reached by the counsellors. Also this group of students may not recognize the existence nor the benefits of counselling services. Some students demonstrated in early October that they were not aware of who the counsellors were even though it could later be established that these same students had met with a counsellor. It is then highly unlikely that students in this group who are unaware of counselling services, would take advantage of the service even if they recognized that they had an unsatisfied need or problem.

There seems to be a need for specially designed transition programs to meet the needs of students who require more help with adjustment. These students seem to be a relatively small percentage of the total student group as is apparent when referring to Figure 2. This graphic "Comparison of Average Responses Indicating the Degree to which Needs are Being Met," shows clearly that for the majority of those surveyed high percentages rated Needs Satisfactorily Met. To provide for those whose needs are not being met and to bring about an improvement in the school environment for all students, the authors have written the following recommendations.

## Recommendations

The authors fully recognize the current constraints on staff, time, and resources. The following Recommendations are suggestions based on the Needs we observed. They are goals which we believe will lead to an improvement in the students' environment as implementation becomes possible. It is also recognized that in some of the schools concerned (Middle and feeder elementary schools) some forms of the programs recommended here are in effect.

### Expansion of Existing Programs

1. That a district approach to transition be promoted so that successful existing programs are identified, expanded, and adopted by all schools for the benefit of the students.

2. That the number of visits by Grade 5 students to the Middle School be increased to two, the first to be a general orientation and tour lasting half a day. The second would be a full day visit where the Grade 5 students would be placed in a class (possibly with their next year's teacher) to experience an entire day at the school participating fully with the day's activities and becoming familiar with teachers and students.

3. That present efforts to inform parents and students about the transition process as well as district transition programs, be promoted and improved to increase successful contact and communication.

4. That as part of the above efforts, new and creative means be instituted to attract parents to orientation meetings; one such idea would be the staging of a 'Guidance Play'. (Childress, 1982) to demonstrate important aspects of a smooth adjustment to Middle School.

5. That present efforts to improve articulation between school levels continue. Further opportunities and release-time should be provided by the district for teachers at the elementary and Middle Schools to meet on matters of curriculum articulation as well as differing expectations at different school levels (e.g., developmental research and report writing skills).

6. That a program of education be implemented that encourages older students to welcome the new students assisting where possible to make adjustment easier for new Grade 6 students. Such an attitude of helpfulness and empathy for Grade 6 students would help to make the first weeks less stressful. A program such as **Project Help** might be expanded to provide this education.

New Activities

1. That a program planned by elementary and Middle School staff be implemented at the elementary school in the last part of the Grade 5 year to expose these students to some experiences they will encounter on reaching Middle School. The intent would be to give students some prior experiences that would lessen some of the confusion at the beginning of Grade 6.

2. That on the first day of Grade 6 when new students arrive, they be met at the bus or some other designated receiving place. From there they would be escorted in groups by volunteer students or staff to where their new teacher and classmates would be assembled. The strangeness and fear of those first minutes could be converted into a welcoming event.

3. That a 'social time' be provided in the first two weeks for new students to meet other teachers and staff (administrators and counsellors). The strangeness of the environment for the new student could be reduced by making new acquaintances and becoming familiar with new faces.

4. That a 'staggered start-up' be considered where all staff would be present at the school for a day with only the new Grade 6 students in attendance before the older students arrive. The intent of this measure would be to give the new students the chance to become comfortable and familiar with new routines and personalities in a less crowded and busy environment.

5. That the school district promote and make clear to parents and students the procedures by which a student may receive an assessment of their need for Learning Assistance, as well as establish clear criteria for admission to this service.

6. That programs be further developed which address the needs of students experiencing difficulty in Academic, Social, or Personal matters and that to some extent the model of "students helping students" be utilized under the supervision of staff. These programs might take the form of Study Skills, Peer Tutoring, and/or Peer Counselling programs as advocated by Carr and Saunders (1980).

7. That the transition of all Grade 6 students be evaluated yearly using some method of survey and that assistance be made available to any individual who experiences a serious transitional difficulty (academically, socially or personally). The student might be given the opportunity to meet with a staff member for the purpose of consultation and problem-solving, and then be monitored for necessary follow-up.

8. That in agreement with the concept that transition should be a process rather than an event, programs and activities to this end should begin as early as the January of Grade 5 and continue through the fall of Grade 6, ending with evaluation. This recognizes the role of elementary as well as Middle School personnel in this process.

Again we recognize that current limitations on staff, time, and resources will affect the ability of the present school system to act upon recommendations which address the needs of these students.

## Future Directions

Notwithstanding the fact that this study undertook comprehensive measures and yielded a considerable amount of information regarding the transition process, its authors have become aware of further research efforts that we feel would be valuable in augmenting the results contained herein.

We would like to recommend that as transition is recognized as a vital element in educational program planning across school levels and as it is necessary to the success and happiness of each student, the following future research activities be undertaken.

That a further study using the present instrument or a modified form thereof be conducted with random samples of substantial numbers of Grade 5 parents and students bound for Middle School. This study would take place in the spring of Grade 5 before major Transition Program activities have occurred and be repeated again in the late fall of Grade 6 after Transition Program activities have been completed.

The ability to extrapolate beyond what is possible in the present study and to make comparisons of the results from the spring Grade 5 administration to the fall of Grade 6 administration would be of obvious value.

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Appendix A

Summary of Frequencies Tables

## Appendix A

SUMMARY OF FREQUENCIES (%) OF RESPONSE

FOR ALL SURVEY ITEMS (by Group)

| | | GRADE 6 STUDENTS | | | | | | GRADE 6 PARENTS | | | | | | GRADE 5 PARENTS | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Needs IMPORTANT | | | Help Received SATISFACTORY | | | Needs IMPORTANT | | | Help Received SATISFACTORY | | | Needs IMPORTANT | | | Help Received SATISFACTORY | | |
| | No. | Not | Imp. | Very | Not | Sat. | Very | Not | Imp. | Very | Not | Sat. | Very | Not | Imp. | Very | Not | Sat. | Very |
| ROUTINES | 1 | 15.4 | 51.3 | 33.3 | 13.9 | 63.5 | 22.6 | 3.3 | 49.2 | 47.5 | 13.8 | 69.0 | 17.2 | 8.1 | 43.2 | 48.6 | 8.3 | 75.0 | 16.7 |
| | 3 | 5.2 | 37.1 | 57.8 | 23.3 | 42.2 | 33.6 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 14.0 | 57.9 | 28.1 | 2.7 | 37.8 | 59.5 | 4.2 | 83.3 | 12.5 |
| | 5 | 7.8 | 37.1 | 55.2 | 15.7 | 40.9 | 43.5 | 0.0 | 36.1 | 63.9 | 6.8 | 61.0 | 32.2 | 5.6 | 27.8 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 69.2 | 30.8 |
| | 7 | 7.0 | 32.2 | 60.9 | 9.7 | 51.3 | 38.9 | 0.0 | 42.6 | 57.4 | 7.3 | 65.5 | 27.3 | 5.4 | 32.4 | 62.2 | 4.0 | 56.0 | 40.0 |
| | 9 | 10.3 | 32.8 | 56.9 | 19.1 | 50.4 | 30.4 | 3.3 | 48.3 | 48.3 | 13.2 | 66.0 | 20.8 | 5.6 | 30.6 | 63.9 | 20.0 | 80.0 | 0.0 |
| | 11 | 9.4 | 47.9 | 41.9 | 25.0 | 47.4 | 27.6 | 12.5 | 53.1 | 34.4 | 4.2 | 85.4 | 10.4 | 33.3 | 44.4 | 22.2 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 22.2 |
| | 13 | 47.9 | 40.2 | 12.0 | 31.6 | 48.2 | 20.2 | 7.9 | 60.3 | 31.7 | 20.0 | 63.6 | 14.5 | 8.3 | 75.0 | 16.7 | 11.8 | 76.5 | 11.8 |
| | 15 | 22.4 | 46.6 | 31.0 | 23.1 | 50.4 | 26.5 | 22.2 | 63.5 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 73.8 | 11.9 | 13.5 | 67.6 | 18.9 | 16.7 | 66.7 | 16.7 |
| | 17 | 20.5 | 49.6 | 29.9 | 29.1 | 47.9 | 23.1 | 11.3 | 50.0 | 38.7 | 23.9 | 65.2 | 10.9 | 8.3 | 63.9 | 27.8 | 8.0 | 76.0 | 16.0 |
| ACADEMIC | 19 | 24.1 | 43.1 | 32.8 | 21.6 | 47.4 | 31.0 | 10.0 | 61.7 | 28.3 | 20.4 | 75.9 | 3.7 | 21.6 | 43.2 | 35.1 | 0.0 | 82.6 | 17.4 |
| | 21 | 11.1 | 52.1 | 36.8 | 13.7 | 47.0 | 39.3 | 1.6 | 36.5 | 61.9 | 12.8 | 72.3 | 14.9 | 2.8 | 36.1 | 61.1 | 8.3 | 70.8 | 20.8 |
| | 23 | 9.4 | 35.9 | 54.7 | 30.8 | 41.9 | 27.4 | 3.3 | 31.1 | 65.6 | 32.7 | 53.8 | 13.5 | 5.4 | 21.6 | 73.0 | 8.3 | 62.5 | 29.2 |
| | 25 | 30.2 | 38.8 | 31.0 | 31.6 | 51.3 | 17.1 | 9.7 | 48.4 | 41.9 | 21.7 | 60.9 | 15.2 | 11.1 | 61.1 | 27.8 | 9.1 | 81.8 | 9.1 |
| | 27 | 5.2 | 42.2 | 52.6 | 25.6 | 42.7 | 31.6 | 1.7 | 21.7 | 76.7 | 42.3 | 48.1 | 5.8 | 2.8 | 8.3 | 88.9 | 23.8 | 57.1 | 19.0 |
| | 29 | 17.9 | 45.3 | 36.8 | 19.8 | 43.1 | 37.1 | 24.2 | 56.5 | 19.4 | 1.9 | 79.2 | 17.0 | 21.6 | 64.9 | 13.5 | 0.0 | 90.0 | 10.0 |
| | 31 | 38.5 | 40.2 | 21.4 | 52.2 | 33.9 | 13.9 | 41.7 | 41.7 | 16.7 | 48.5 | 48.5 | 3.0 | 32.4 | 59.5 | 8.1 | 6.7 | 93.3 | 0.0 |
| | 33 | 7.8 | 44.8 | 47.4 | 20.9 | 46.1 | 33.0 | 3.4 | 30.5 | 66.1 | 26.0 | 56.0 | 18.0 | 0.0 | 41.7 | 58.3 | 15.0 | 55.0 | 30.0 |
| | 35 | 15.8 | 46.5 | 37.7 | 45.3 | 34.2 | 20.5 | 10.0 | 30.0 | 60.0 | 31.1 | 53.3 | 13.3 | 2.7 | 37.8 | 59.5 | 18.2 | 36.4 | 45.5 |
| | 37 | 7.8 | 19.8 | 72.4 | 26.7 | 40.5 | 32.8 | 6.9 | 34.5 | 58.6 | 25.0 | 61.4 | 13.6 | 2.8 | 38.9 | 58.3 | 9.1 | 72.7 | 18.2 |
| | 39 | 14.7 | 46.6 | 38.8 | 29.8 | 47.4 | 22.8 | 13.8 | 44.8 | 41.4 | 18.6 | 72.1 | 4.7 | 5.6 | 55.6 | 38.9 | 9.5 | 61.9 | 28.6 |
| | 41 | 9.4 | 48.7 | 41.9 | 8.6 | 50.9 | 40.5 | 3.4 | 64.4 | 32.2 | 1.7 | 67.2 | 31.0 | 11.1 | 41.7 | 47.2 | 4.5 | 50.0 | 45.5 |
| | 43 | 19.3 | 41.2 | 39.5 | 20.9 | 53.0 | 26.1 | 8.6 | 58.6 | 32.8 | 7.4 | 77.8 | 13.0 | 25.7 | 42.9 | 31.4 | 8.7 | 56.5 | 34.8 |
| SOCIAL | 45 | 41.0 | 47.9 | 11.1 | 54.8 | 39.1 | 6.1 | 46.7 | 35.0 | 18.3 | 30.4 | 56.5 | 10.9 | 56.8 | 21.6 | 21.6 | 20.0 | 66.7 | 13.3 |
| | 47 | 14.0 | 41.2 | 44.7 | 31.5 | 45.9 | 22.5 | 1.7 | 42.4 | 55.9 | 28.1 | 64.9 | 7.0 | 2.7 | 45.9 | 51.4 | 5.3 | 89.5 | 5.3 |
| | 49 | 24.1 | 41.4 | 34.5 | 25.9 | 43.8 | 30.4 | 10.0 | 46.7 | 43.3 | 12.5 | 66.7 | 20.8 | 21.6 | 40.5 | 37.8 | 21.1 | 78.9 | 0.0 |
| | 51 | 16.4 | 55.2 | 28.4 | 31.6 | 55.6 | 12.8 | 6.7 | 66.7 | 26.7 | 14.0 | 78.0 | 8.0 | 22.2 | 50.0 | 27.8 | 13.3 | 80.0 | 6.7 |
| | 53 | 12.2 | 29.6 | 58.3 | 27.2 | 40.4 | 32.5 | 10.0 | 53.3 | 36.7 | 46.7 | 46.7 | 6.7 | 25.7 | 48.6 | 25.7 | 15.0 | 65.0 | 15.0 |
| | 55 | 15.5 | 56.9 | 27.6 | 19.8 | 50.9 | 29.3 | 6.5 | 69.4 | 24.2 | 12.7 | 70.9 | 16.4 | 10.8 | 51.4 | 37.8 | 4.5 | 63.6 | 31.8 |
| | 57 | 15.7 | 46.1 | 38.3 | 24.3 | 47.0 | 28.7 | 28.8 | 66.1 | 5.1 | 8.3 | 83.3 | 6.3 | 33.3 | 61.1 | 5.6 | 10.0 | 85.0 | 5.0 |
| | 59 | 9.6 | 33.3 | 57.0 | 34.5 | 35.3 | 30.2 | 5.2 | 17.2 | 77.6 | 38.1 | 47.6 | 14.3 | 8.3 | 11.1 | 80.6 | 28.6 | 33.3 | 38.1 |
| | 61 | 45.2 | 37.4 | 17.4 | 50.9 | 35.3 | 13.8 | 45.8 | 47.5 | 6.8 | 16.2 | 75.7 | 2.7 | 48.6 | 45.9 | 5.4 | 11.1 | 88.9 | 0.0 |
| PERSONAL | 63 | 22.6 | 55.7 | 21.7 | 36.3 | 49.6 | 14.2 | 8.8 | 77.2 | 14.0 | 21.1 | 65.8 | 13.2 | 5.7 | 65.7 | 28.6 | 5.0 | 75.0 | 20.0 |
| | 65 | 5.2 | 33.6 | 61.2 | 24.3 | 38.3 | 37.4 | 1.7 | 27.6 | 70.7 | 20.9 | 65.1 | 14.0 | 0.0 | 14.3 | 85.7 | 4.8 | 47.6 | 42.9 |
| | 67 | 13.0 | 47.0 | 40.0 | 29.6 | 47.0 | 23.5 | 7.0 | 63.2 | 29.8 | 22.0 | 65.9 | 4.9 | 13.9 | 50.0 | 36.1 | 28.6 | 35.7 | 35.7 |
| | 69 | 14.4 | 46.8 | 38.7 | 30.7 | 43.0 | 26.3 | 3.4 | 49.2 | 47.5 | 19.6 | 56.5 | 21.7 | 0.0 | 35.1 | 64.9 | 4.8 | 52.4 | 42.9 |
| | 71 | 19.7 | 52.1 | 28.2 | 36.8 | 44.4 | 18.8 | 21.0 | 59.7 | 19.4 | 27.5 | 62.5 | 7.5 | 16.2 | 59.5 | 24.3 | 6.3 | 81.3 | 6.3 |
| | 73 | 19.8 | 33.6 | 46.6 | 33.9 | 40.9 | 25.2 | 7.8 | 53.1 | 39.1 | 31.4 | 54.3 | 14.3 | 8.1 | 48.6 | 43.2 | 15.8 | 57.9 | 21.1 |
| | 75 | 9.5 | 41.4 | 49.1 | 28.7 | 36.5 | 34.8 | 3.1 | 34.4 | 62.5 | 31.8 | 50.0 | 18.2 | 0.0 | 36.1 | 63.9 | 0.0 | 68.2 | 31.8 |
| | 77 | 7.8 | 41.4 | 50.9 | 9.6 | 49.1 | 41.2 | 7.8 | 46.9 | 45.3 | 10.0 | 78.0 | 12.0 | 2.8 | 50.0 | 47.2 | 4.2 | 66.7 | 29.2 |
| | 79 | 17.9 | 47.9 | 34.2 | 30.4 | 37.4 | 32.2 | 9.8 | 49.2 | 41.0 | 32.6 | 56.5 | 10.9 | 0.0 | 69.4 | 30.6 | 4.8 | 52.4 | 38.1 |

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## SUMMARY OF FREQUENCIES (%) OF RESPONSE FOR ALL SURVEY ITEMS (by Group)

| | | GRADE 6 TEACHERS | | | | | | GRADE 5 TEACHERS | | | | | | COUNSELLORS | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Needs IMPORTANT | | | Help Received SATISFACTORY | | | Needs IMPORTANT | | | Help Received SATISFACTORY | | | Needs IMPORTANT | | | Help Received SATISFACTORY | | |
| | No. | Not | Imp. | Very | Not | Sat. | Very | Not | Imp. | Very | Not | Sat. | Very | Not | Imp. | Very | Not | Sat. | Very |
| ROUTINES | 1 | 11.1 | 55.6 | 33.3 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 9.1 | 27.3 | 63.6 | 22.2 | 55.6 | 22.2 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| | 3 | 11.1 | 44.4 | 44.4 | 11.1 | 66.7 | 22.2 | 0.0 | 54.5 | 45.5 | 0.0 | 54.5 | 45.5 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 5 | 0.0 | 55.6 | 44.4 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 9.1 | 63.6 | 27.3 | 12.5 | 62.5 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 |
| | 7 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 22.2 | 55.6 | 33.3 | 11.1 | 9.1 | 72.7 | 18.2 | 14.3 | 57.1 | 28.6 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 75.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 9 | 22.2 | 33.3 | 44.4 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 9.1 | 54.5 | 36.4 | 12.5 | 50.0 | 37.5 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 75.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 11 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 36.4 | 45.5 | 18.2 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 13 | 11.1 | 77.8 | 11.1 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 27.3 | 45.5 | 27.3 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | 15 | 22.2 | 55.6 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 81.8 | 9.1 | 9.1 | 16.7 | 50.0 | 16.7 | 25.0 | 50.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 17 | 0.0 | 88.9 | 11.1 | 11.1 | 88.9 | 0.0 | 54.5 | 36.4 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| ACADEMIC | 19 | 33.3 | 44.4 | 22.2 | 33.3 | 55.6 | 11.1 | 63.6 | 27.3 | 9.1 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 21 | 0.0 | 44.4 | 55.6 | 33.3 | 55.6 | 11.1 | 18.2 | 36.4 | 45.5 | 0.0 | 71.4 | 14.3 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 23 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 22.2 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 36.4 | 0.0 | 54.5 | 45.5 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 25 | 11.1 | 66.7 | 22.2 | 11.1 | 77.8 | 11.1 | 54.5 | 27.3 | 18.2 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | 27 | 0.0 | 44.4 | 55.6 | 55.6 | 33.3 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 36.4 | 63.6 | 14.3 | 57.1 | 28.6 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 75.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 |
| | 29 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 22.2 | 33.3 | 55.6 | 11.1 | 54.5 | 36.4 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 83.3 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | 31 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 27.3 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 | 50.0 | 25.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 |
| | 33 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 55.6 | 11.1 | 9.1 | 54.5 | 36.4 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 35 | 11.1 | 66.7 | 22.2 | 33.3 | 44.4 | 22.2 | 45.5 | 36.4 | 18.2 | 25.0 | 50.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 37 | 0.0 | 55.6 | 44.4 | 33.3 | 55.6 | 11.1 | 9.1 | 63.6 | 27.3 | 0.0 | 71.4 | 28.6 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 75.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| | 39 | 11.1 | 44.4 | 44.4 | 55.6 | 33.3 | 11.1 | 54.5 | 36.4 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 80.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 41 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 55.6 | 22.2 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 36.4 | 0.0 | 27.3 | 72.7 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 43 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 27.3 | 63.6 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 83.3 | 16.7 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 50.0 | 25.0 |
| SOCIAL | 45 | 66.7 | 22.2 | 11.1 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 45.5 | 27.3 | 27.3 | 37.5 | 25.0 | 37.5 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | 47 | 0.0 | 55.6 | 44.4 | 22.2 | 55.6 | 22.2 | 0.0 | 36.4 | 63.6 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 49 | 22.2 | 44.4 | 33.3 | 11.1 | 66.7 | 22.2 | 9.1 | 45.5 | 45.5 | 0.0 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| | 51 | 0.0 | 88.9 | 11.1 | 11.1 | 88.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 36.4 | 63.6 | 50.0 | 37.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| | 53 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 18.2 | 63.6 | 18.2 | 11.1 | 88.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 55 | 0.0 | 88.9 | 11.1 | 22.2 | 77.8 | 0.0 | 9.1 | 72.7 | 18.2 | 9.1 | 63.6 | 27.3 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.5 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 57 | 11.1 | 77.8 | 11.1 | 22.2 | 77.8 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 27.3 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 59 | 0.0 | 55.6 | 44.4 | 33.3 | 55.6 | 11.1 | 10.0 | 20.0 | 70.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 37.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 50.0 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| | 61 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 81.8 | 18.2 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| PERSONAL | 63 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 11.1 | 88.9 | 0.0 | 36.4 | 45.5 | 18.2 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 65 | 0.0 | 55.6 | 44.4 | 11.1 | 77.8 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 36.4 | 12.5 | 62.5 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 |
| | 67 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 11.1 | 88.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 36.4 | 0.0 | 57.1 | 28.6 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 |
| | 69 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 33.3 | 11.1 | 55.6 | 33.3 | 9.1 | 45.5 | 45.5 | 0.0 | 45.5 | 54.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| | 71 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 81.8 | 18.2 | 16.7 | 50.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 |
| | 73 | 0.0 | 88.9 | 11.1 | 11.1 | 88.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 72.7 | 27.3 | 0.0 | 85.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 25.0 | 50.0 | 25.0 |
| | 75 | 0.0 | 55.6 | 44.4 | 11.1 | 66.7 | 22.2 | 0.0 | 72.7 | 27.3 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| | 77 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 77.8 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 63.6 | 36.4 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 11.1 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 75.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 |
| | 79 | 0.0 | 77.8 | 22.2 | 22.2 | 66.7 | 11.1 | 18.2 | 54.5 | 27.3 | 0.0 | 60.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 75.0 | 25.0 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 33.3 |

## Appendix B

Questionnaire Samples

INCLUDED: A complete set of the Grade 6 student survey.

To indicate word changes within the survey statements - Directions, the Routine section, and the Supplementary open-ended items for each of the other survey groups are included.

**FOR GRADE SIX STUDENTS**

ORAL EXPLANATIONS AND DIRECTIONS

We are teachers in School District No. 69 (Qualicum), who are interested in finding out what it was like for you when you changed from elementary school and began Grade six at the middle school this year.

This information will help us to know better how new students like you can be helped to get ready for the change to middle school.

Since you are the students who have just changed schools this year, you know about what this experience is like and so we think your opinions are important.

**Whatever you can tell us will be kept confidential. No one except you will know what answers you gave to this questionnaire.**

We will however let everyone know later on what were the most common answers given to important questions.

---

Now we'd like you to think back to the first week in September of this year.

**Remember what it was like?**

This questionnaire is about that first week.

In the questionnaire you will find some statements.

**Let's look at the first example...**

[go to **DIRECTIONS** sheet; first page of questionnaire]

***Do not** put your name on the questionnaire or ANSWER sheet.

***This is not a test.** If you have any questions about this questionnaire ask us to explain. We want to find out your opinions, so please answer all the statements. **Take your time and read each statement carefully.**

**YOU MAY BEGIN NOW.**

Gr. 6 Students

## Directions

### Examples:

1. The first example asks:

   How important is the need to be able to use a combination lock?

   This student thinks the need was IMPORTANT (but not VERY IMPORTANT) so they filled in the circle under B on the ANSWER SHEET beside number 1.

QUESTIONNAIRE

| The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 A | B | C | to know how to use a combination lock. | 2 A | B | C |
| 3 A | B | C | to learn to read my timetable. | 4 A | B | C |

ANSWER SHEET

PRACTICE AREA

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ⓣ | ● | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 2 | ● | Ⓟ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 3 | Ⓣ | Ⓟ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 4 | Ⓣ | Ⓟ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

2. Now look at question 2. They felt that the help they got in learning to use their combination lock was NOT SATISFACTORY, so they filled in the circle under A beside number 2.

3. The next example says:

   When I went to Grade 6 I needed... to learn to read my timetable.

   Pretend that you think this was VERY IMPORTANT. Fill in this answer beside number 3 in the Practice Area.

4. Now look at number 4 and pretend that you think the help you got was SATISFACTORY. Fill in your answer in the Practice Area.

*Never fill in circles under D and E.

---

Now move down to survey statement number 1 and get ready to begin answering at number 1 on the left side of the ANSWER SHEET. Wait for oral instructions before answering.

Put your finger on number 1 on the ANSWER SHEET.

---

STATEMENT 1 SAYS: When I went to Grade 6 I needed...
to know what happens the first day of school.

* ROUTINES

| | The need is: | | | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | | | NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
| 1 | A | B | C | to know what happens the first day of school. | 2 | A | B | C |
| 3 | A | B | C | to know how to find my classrooms and my way around the school. | 4 | A | B | C |
| 5 | A | B | C | to know the school rules. | 6 | A | B | C |
| 7 | A | B | C | to know what would happen if I broke a rule. | 8 | A | B | C |
| 9 | A | B | C | to know how to get my books and supplies ready for different classes. | 10 | A | B | C |
| 11 | A | B | C | to know how to act in different teachers' classes. | 12 | A | B | C |
| 13 | A | B | C | to know what I could do in my spare time at lunch. | 14 | A | B | C |
| 15 | A | B | C | to know about the Student's Council and what it could do for me. | 16 | A | B | C |
| 17 | A | B | C | to know what I could see the principal or vice principal about. | 18 | A | B | C |

| | The need is: | | | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | | | NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
| 19 | A | B | C | to know how much school work I would have for each subject. | 20 | A | B | C |
| 21 | A | B | C | to know how to use the Library for doing projects. | 22 | A | B | C |
| 23 | A | B | C | to know how to prepare a written report. | 24 | A | B | C |
| 25 | A | B | C | to know how my teachers would mark my work. | 26 | A | B | C |
| 27 | A | B | C | to know how to study well. | 28 | A | B | C |
| 29 | A | B | C | to know what we would be expected to do in Physical Education. | 30 | A | B | C |
| 31 | A | B | C | to know if there is a student who could help me with school work. | 32 | A | B | C |
| 33 | A | B | C | to know how to get extra help from my teachers. | 34 | A | B | C |
| 35 | A | B | C | to know how to get learning assistance if I needed it. | 36 | A | B | C |
| 37 | A | B | C | to know how to get caught up if I got behind in my school work. | 38 | A | B | C |
| 39 | A | B | C | to know how I will be graded by different subject teachers. | 40 | A | B | C |
| 41 | A | B | C | to have information about the electives program. | 42 | A | B | C |
| 43 | A | B | C | to know how much homework I will get. | 44 | A | B | C |

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 45 | A | B | C | to have a chance to meet my teachers before the first day of school. | 46 | A | B | C |
| 47 | A | B | C | to feel welcomed by the rest of the school. | 48 | A | B | C |
| 49 | A | B | C | to have a chance to talk with some of my friends during the first day. | 50 | A | B | C |
| 51 | A | B | C | to have ways to get to know some of the other grade six students. | 52 | A | B | C |
| 53 | A | B | C | to know how I would be treated by the Grade 7's and Grade 8's. | 54 | A | B | C |
| 55 | A | B | C | to know what clubs and sports I could join at school. | 56 | A | B | C |
| 57 | A | B | C | to know more about special school events, like dances. | 58 | A | B | C |
| 59 | A | B | C | to know how to make my own decisions instead of following "the crowd". | 60 | A | B | C |
| 61 | A | B | C | to have a chance to meet the Grade 7 and 8 teachers. | 62 | A | B | C |

| | The need is: NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | When I went to Grade 6 I needed: | | The help I got was: NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 63 | A | B | C | to be given the chance to help out in the school in some way. | 64 | A | B | C |
| 65 | A | B | C | to know a teacher that I could talk to if I was confused about something. | 66 | A | B | C |
| 67 | A | B | C | to know how to make new friends. | 68 | A | B | C |
| 69 | A | B | C | to know who the counsellors were and what I could ask them about for help. | 70 | A | B | C |
| 71 | A | B | C | to meet another student who would give me some help if I needed it. | 72 | A | B | C |
| 73 | A | B | C | to meet a helpful person who would notice me and care about what I thought | 74 | A | B | C |
| 75 | A | B | C | to know who I could talk to if I had a problem with another student. | 76 | A | B | C |
| 77 | A | B | C | to learn more about my responsibilities at school. | 78 | A | B | C |
| 79 | A | B | C | to be able to meet and talk with someone about how I was getting along. | 80 | A | B | C |

SUPPLEMENTARY OPEN-ENDED ITEMS

(to be answered on this sheet)

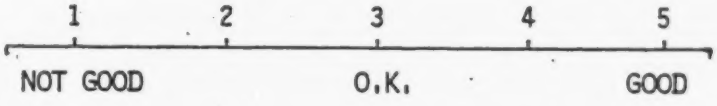
6s

I. Other things that I needed to help me get ready for middle school were:

| | Was the help you received SATISFACTORY? YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |

II. What was the first month of Middle School like for you?

(circle the number of your choice)




HOW?/WHY?

_____

_____

_____

SUPPLEMENTARY OPEN-ENDED ITEMS (A to H) Grade 6 - students
(to be answered on this sheet)

A. Name three things that you like about being at the middle school this year:

B. How do you think Grade 6 is different from Grade 5?

1) in school subjects

2) outside of class

C. Name some things you found hard to get used to at the middle school this year:

1) in school subjects

2) outside of class

D. What things done in Grade 6 are the same as those done in Grade 5?

6s

E. What did elementary school do to get you ready for the middle school?

_____

_____

_____

F. What did the middle school do to get you ready for coming to Grade 6?

_____

_____

_____

G. What could elementary school do to get you ready for the middle school?

_____

_____

_____

H. What could the middle school do to get you ready for coming to Grade 6?

_____

_____

_____

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## DIRECTIONS for PARENTS of Grades 5 and 6 students /Grade 5 TEACHERS

There are a number of things a grade six student may need to learn about before starting middle school.

The following questionnaire will determine how important you feel the listed needs are and how satisfactory you feel the help was that your son/daughter received to meet the needs.

ANSWER SHEETS will be computer scored. Codes appearing on side 2 are for statistical purposes only.

PLEASE- Read the IMPORTANT DIRECTIONS FOR MARKING ANSWERS on side 1 of the Answer Sheet. PLEASE NOTE: Use HB (medium soft) pencil only.

- Ignore the T and F in the circles under the A and B columns.
- Do not put any marks in E or elsewhere on the sheet.
- Fill in one circle only when answering each question:
  A,B, or C when answering the NEED questions (left side of questionnaire).
  A,B,C, or D when answering the HELP RECEIVED questions (right side).
- Fill in all responses on the ANSWER SHEET, not on the questionnaire.
- Be certain that the number of the questionnaire statement and the number you are completing on the answer sheet is the same.

### QUESTIONNAIRE/ANSWER SHEET

1. Look at the student need:
   example: to know what happens the first day of school.

2. Decide how important you think the need is.
   Fill in your response on the ANSWER SHEET as follows:

| If you think the need is: | | A B C D E |
|---|---|---|
| NOT IMPORTANT | then fill in the A circle on the ANSWER SHEET | 1 O O O O O |
| IMPORTANT | " " " " B " | |
| VERY IMPORTANT | " " " " C " | |

3. Decide how satisfactory the help was that your son/daughter received to meet this need.
   Fill in your response on the ANSWER SHEET as follows:

| If you think the help received to meet this need was: | | A B C D E |
|---|---|---|
| NOT SATISFACTORY | then fill in the A circle on the ANSWER SHEET | 2 O O O O O |
| SATISFACTORY | " " " " B " | |
| VERY SATISFACTORY | " " " " C " | |
| If you DON'T KNOW | what help they receive then fill in the D circle on the ANSWER SHEET | |

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!*

**ROUTINES**

| | This need is: | | | When my child went to Grade 6 he/she needed: | The help they receive is: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | | NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY | I DON'T KNOW |
| 1 | A | B | C | to know what happens the first day of school. | 2 A | B | C | D |
| 3 | A | B | C | to know how to find their classrooms and their way around the school. | 4 A | B | C | D |
| 5 | A | B | C | to know the school rules. | 6 A | B | C | D |
| 7 | A | B | C | to know what would happen if they broke a rule. | 8 A | B | C | D |
| 9 | A | B | C | to know how to get their books and supplies ready for different classes. | 10 A | B | C | D |
| 11 | A | B | C | to know how to act in different teachers' classes. | 12 A | B | C | D |
| 13 | A | B | C | to know what they could do in their spare time at lunch. | 14 A | B | C | D |
| 15 | A | B | C | to know about the Student's Council and what it could do for them. | 16 A | B | C | D |
| 17 | A | B | C | to know what they could see the principal or vice principal about. | 18 A | B | C | D |

SUPPLEMENTARY OPEN-ENDED ITEMS

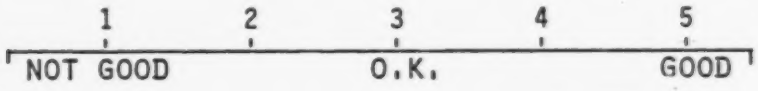
(to be answered on this sheet)

I. Other things my child needed to help prepare for middle school were:

| | Was the help they received SATISFACTORY? YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |

II. What was the first month of middle school like for your child?

(circle the number of your choice)




HOW?/WHY?

_____

_____

_____

SUPPLEMENTARY OPEN-ENDED ITEMS (A to J)

(to be answered on this sheet)

A. Name three things that you like about your child being at the middle school this year:

B. How do you think Grade 6 is different from Grade 5?

(1) in school subjects

(2) outside of class

C. Name some things your child found hard to get used to at the middle school this year:

(1) in school subjects

(2) outside of class

D. What things done in Grade 6 are the same as those done in Grade 5?

E. What **did** the elementary schools do to prepare your child for the middle school?

_____

_____

_____

F. What **did** the middle school do to prepare your child for coming to Grade 6?

_____

_____

_____

G. What **could** elementary schools do to prepare your child for the middle school?

_____

_____

_____

H. What **could** the middle school do to prepare your child for coming to Grade 6?

_____

_____

_____

I. Were the efforts of school personnel successful in placing your child in an appropriate learning environment?

YES ☐ NO ☐

J. Have you ever attended an orientation meeting at the middle school?

YES ☐ NO ☐

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## ROUTINES

| | This need is: | | | When my child goes to Grade 6 he/she will need: | | I expect the help provided will be: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | | | NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY | I DON'T KNOW |
| 1 | A | B | C | to know what happens the first day of school. | 2 | A | B | C | D |
| 3 | A | B | C | to know how to find their classrooms and their way around the school. | 4 | A | B | C | D |
| 5 | A | B | C | to know the school rules. | 6 | A | B | C | D |
| 7 | A | B | C | to know what would happen if they broke a rule. | 8 | A | B | C | D |
| 9 | A | B | C | to know how to get their books and supplies ready for different classes. | 10 | A | B | C | D |
| 11 | A | B | C | to know how to act in different teachers' classes. | 12 | A | B | C | D |
| 13 | A | B | C | to know what they could do in their spare time at lunch. | 14 | A | B | C | D |
| 15 | A | B | C | to know about the Student's Council and what it could do for them. | 16 | A | B | C | D |
| 17 | A | B | C | to know what they could see the principal or vice principal about. | 18 | A | B | C | D |

SUPPLEMENTARY OPEN-ENDED ITEMS (A to J) Grade 5 - parents

(to be answered on this sheet)

A. Name three things that you like about your child going to the middle school next year:

B. How do you think Grade 6 is different from Grade 5?

(1) in school subjects

(2) outside of class

C. Name some things you think your child may find hard to get used to at the middle school next year:

(1) in school subjects

(2) outside of class

D. What things done in Grade 6 are the same as those done in Grade 5?

E. What do elementary schools do to prepare students for the middle school?

_____
_____
_____

F. What does the middle school do to prepare for incoming Grade 6 students?

_____
_____
_____

G. What could elementary schools do to prepare students for the middle school?

_____
_____
_____

H. What could the middle school do to prepare for incoming Grade 6 students?

_____
_____
_____

---

I. Other things your child will need to help him/her get ready for middle school next year are:

_____
_____
_____

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| | This need is: | | | In preparation for Grade 6, students need: | | The help they receive is | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | | | NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY | I DON'T KNOW |
| 1 | A | B | C | to know what happens the first day of school. | 2 | A | B | C | D |
| 3 | A | B | C | to know how to find their classrooms and their way around the school. | 4 | A | B | C | D |
| 5 | A | B | C | to know the school rules. | 6 | A | B | C | D |
| 7 | A | B | C | to know what would happen if they broke a rule. | 8 | A | B | C | D |
| 9 | A | B | C | to know how to get their books and supplies ready for different classes. | 10 | A | B | C | D |
| 11 | A | B | C | to know how to act in different teachers' classes. | 12 | A | B | C | D |
| 13 | A | B | C | to know what they could do in their spare time at lunch. | 14 | A | B | C | D |
| 15 | A | B | C | to know about the Student's Council and what it could do for them. | 16 | A | B | C | D |
| 17 | A | B | C | to know what they could see the principal and vice principal about. | 18 | A | B | C | D |

SUPPLEMENTARY OPEN-ENDED ITEMS (A to J) Grade 5 - teachers
(to be answered on this sheet)

A. Name three things that you like about your students going to the middle school next year:

B. How do you think Grade 6 is different from Grade 5?

(1) in school subjects

(2) outside of class

C. Name some things you think your students will find hard to get used to at the middle school next year:

(1) in school subjects

(2) outside of class

D. What things done in Grade 6 are the same as those done in Grade 5?

E. What do the elementary schools do to prepare students for the middle school?

_____

_____

_____

F. What does the middle school do to prepare for incoming Grade 6 students?

_____

_____

_____

G. What could elementary schools do to prepare students for the middle school?

_____

_____

_____

H. What could the middle school do to prepare for incoming Grade 6 students?

_____

_____

_____

---

I. Other things your students will need to help them get ready for middle school are:

_____

_____

_____



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# DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHERS - GRADE 6

There are a number of things a grade six student may need to learn about before starting middle school.

The following questionnaire will determine how important you feel the listed needs are and how satisfactory you feel the help was that your students received to meet the needs.

ANSWER SHEETS will be computer scored. Codes appearing on side 2 are for statistical purposes only.

PLEASE:- Read the IMPORTANT DIRECTIONS FOR MARKING ANSWERS on side 1 of the Answer Sheet. PLEASE NOTE: Use HB (medium soft) pencil only.
- Ignore the T and F in the circles under the A and B columns.
- Do not put any marks in D or E or elsewhere on the sheet.
- Fill in one circle only (A,B, or C) when answering each question.
- Fill in all responses on the ANSWER SHEET, not on the questionnaire.
- Be certain that the number of the questionnaire statement and the number you are completing on the answer sheet is the same.

## QUESTIONNAIRE/ANSWER SHEET

1. Look at the student need:
   example: to know what happens the first day of school.

2. Decide how important you think the need is.
   Fill in your response on the ANSWER SHEET as follows:

| If you think the need is: | | | | | | | A B C D E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT IMPORTANT | then fill in the | | | A | circle on the ANSWER SHEET | 1 | O O O O O |
| IMPORTANT | " | " | " | B | " | | |
| VERY IMPORTANT | " | " | " | C | " | | |

3. Decide how satisfactory the help was that (your son/daughter, your student) received to meet this need.
   Fill in your response on the ANSWER SHEET as follows:

| If you think the help received to meet this need was: | | | | | | | A B C D E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT SATISFACTORY | then fill in the | | | A | circle on the ANSWER SHEET | 2 | O O O O O |
| SATISFACTORY | " | " | " | B | " | | |
| VERY SATISFACTORY | " | " | " | C | " | | |

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!*

| | This need is: | | | In preparation for Grade 6, students need: | | The help they receive is: | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | NOT IMPORTANT | IMPORTANT | VERY IMPORTANT | | | NOT SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | VERY SATISFACTORY |
| 1 | A | B | C | to know what happens the first day of school. | 2 | A | B | C |
| 3 | A | B | C | to know how to find their classrooms and their way around the school. | 4 | A | B | C |
| 5 | A | B | C | to know the school rules. | 6 | A | B | C |
| 7 | A | B | C | to know what would happen if they broke a rule. | 8 | A | B | C |
| 9 | A | B | C | to know how to get their books and supplies ready for different classes. | 10 | A | B | C |
| 11 | A | B | C | to know how to act in different teachers' classes. | 12 | A | B | C |
| 13 | A | B | C | to know what they could do in their spare time at lunch. | 14 | A | B | C |
| 15 | A | B | C | to know about the Student's Council and what it could do for them. | 16 | A | B | C |
| 17 | A | B | C | to know what they could see the principal or vice principal about. | 18 | A | B | C |

SUPPLEMENTARY OPEN-ENDED ITEMS

(to be answered on this sheet)

| | Was the help received SATISFACTORY? | |
|---|---|---|
| I. Other things that students need to help them get ready for middle school: | YES | NO |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | ☐ | ☐ |

SUPPLEMENTARY OPEN-ENDED ITEMS (A to J) Grade 6 - teachers

(to be answered on this sheet)

A. Name three things that you like about your students being at the middle school this year:

B. How do you think Grade 6 is different from Grade 5?

1) in school subjects

2) outside of class

C. Name some things your students found hard to get used to at the middle school this year:

1) in school subjects

2) outside of class

D. What things done in Grade 6 are the same as those done in Grade 5?

E. What did the elementary schools do to prepare your students for the middle school?

_____

_____

_____

F. What did the middle school do to prepare for incoming Grade 6 students?

_____

_____

_____

G. What could elementary schools do to prepare your students for the middle school?

_____

_____

_____

H. What could the middle school do to prepare for incoming Grade 6 students?

_____

_____

_____

I. Were the efforts of school personnel successful in placing your student in an appropriate learning environment?

YES ☐ NO ☐

J. Have you ever attended an orientation meeting at the middle school?

YES ☐ NO ☐

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NAME _____ Appendix C SIDE ONE

## Computer Answer Sheet (NCS)

FOR USE WITH ALL NCS SENTRY-OPTICAL MARK READING SYSTEMS

EXAMPLE

1 T F ○ ○ ○ WRONG
2 T F ⊗ ○ ○ WRONG
3 T F ● ○ ○ WRONG
4 T F ○ ● ○ RIGHT

### IMPORTANT DIRECTIONS FOR MARKING ANSWERS

Use black lead pencil only (#2½ or softer).
Make heavy black marks that fill the circle completely.
Erase clearly any answer you wish to change.
Make no stray marks on this answer sheet.

← REFER TO THESE EXAMPLES BEFORE STARTING PRACTICE EXERCISES →

PRACTICE

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 2 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 3 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 4 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 2 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 3 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 4 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 5 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 6 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 7 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 8 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 9 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 10 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 11 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 12 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 13 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 14 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 15 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 16 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 17 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 18 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 19 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 20 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 21 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 22 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 23 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 24 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 25 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 26 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 27 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 28 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 29 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 30 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 31 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 32 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 33 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 34 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 35 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 36 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 37 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 38 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 39 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 40 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 41 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 42 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 43 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 44 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 45 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 46 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 47 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 48 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 49 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 50 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 51 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 52 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 53 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 54 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 55 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 56 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 57 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 58 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 59 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 60 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 61 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 62 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 63 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 64 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 65 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 66 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 67 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 68 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 69 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 70 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 71 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 72 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 73 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 74 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 75 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 76 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 77 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 78 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 79 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 80 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 81 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 82 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 83 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 84 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 85 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 86 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 87 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 88 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 89 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 90 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 91 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 92 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 93 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 94 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 95 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 96 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 97 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 98 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 99 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 100 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 101 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 102 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 103 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 104 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 105 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 106 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 107 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 108 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 109 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 110 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 111 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 112 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 113 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 114 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 115 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 116 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 117 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 118 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 119 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 120 | T | F | ○ | ○ | ○ |



NCS Trans-Optic 01-30423-14131211

Correspondence

October 9, 1984

Dear Parents: [of Grade 6 students]

We are studying the Transition needs of students entering middle school in District 69.

The enclosed confidential survey asks for your opinions about your child's experience when they changed from elementary to middle school.

This survey has the support of the School Board of School District No. 69 (Qualicum) who values your informed opinions. We hope to learn how to improve the programs that prepare grade six students for this important change.

Financial support for the project is being provided through a grant from the Educational Research Institute of B.C. The Results of this study will be made publicly available in the spring of 1985 in a Report to the School District.

Since you are one of a limited number of parents that have been randomly selected, it is very important that we receive your completed questionnaire.

Please mail completed questionnaire and answer sheet by Monday, October 15, 1984. If you cannot possibly meet this deadline, please mail it as soon as possible. For your convenience we have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

If you have any questions about this survey, do not hesitate to phone us:

Bob Carpenter, Winchelsea Elementary, 248-3296
Phil Gardner, Errington Elementary, 248-3334

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study.

Sincerely,

B. Carpenter P. Gardner

Bob Carpenter and Phil Gardner

School District No. 69 (Qualicum)

October 15, 1984

Dear Parents: [of Grade 5 students]

We are studying the Transition needs of students entering middle school in District 69.

The enclosed confidential survey asks for your opinions about your child's experience when they change from elementary to middle school.

This survey has the support of the School Board of School District No. 69 (Qualicum) who values your informed opinions. We hope to learn how to improve the programs that prepare grade six students for this important change.

Financial support for the project is being provided through a grant from the Educational Research Institute of B.C. The Results of this study will be made publicly available in the spring of 1985 in a Report to the School District.

Since you are one of a limited number of parents that have been randomly selected, it is very important that we receive your completed questionnaire.

Please mail completed questionnaire and answer sheet by Monday, October 22, 1984.

If you cannot possibly meet this deadline, please mail it as soon as possible. For your convenience we have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

If you have any questions about this survey, do not hesitate to phone us:

Bob Carpenter, Winchelsea Elementary, 248-3296
Phil Gardner, Errington Elementary, 248-3334

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study.

Sincerely,

Bob Carpenter P. Gardner

Bob Carpenter and Phil Gardner

School District No. 69 (Qualicum)

TO: The Staffs of

Parksville Middle School
Qualicum Beach Middle School

FROM: Bob Carpenter
Phil Gardner

DATE: Sept. 14, 1984

As completion of requirement for our master's degree through the University of Victoria, we are working on a project entitled "Needs Assessment for Transition from Elementary Schools to Middle Schools (as undertaken in School District #69).

This project involves conducting surveys of the importance of perceived needs of students in transition (gr. 5 to gr. 6) and perceptions of how well their needs are being met. The surveys are aimed at current Grade 6 students, Grade 6 parents, Grade 6 teachers, Grade 5 parents, and Grade 5 teachers.

We would like to ask for your assistance in several ways:-

1. Meet with us to allow us to explain our project and to address any concerns.

2. Grade 6 teachers: complete survey (40 - 60 minutes).

3. Allow us to randomly select 50 Grade 6 students and remove them from class for a 1 hour block of time early in October.

We are fully aware of your time and energy spent involved in the Middle School Assessment. We hope our project will not seriously inconvenience you and that the information provided in our report will be useful for all of us involved in elementary to middle school transition.

If it can be arranged, we would appreciate meeting briefly especially with Grade 6 teachers, as soon as possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Phil Gardner - E.E.S.
Bob Carpenter - W.E.S.

EDUCATIONAL
RESEARCH
INSTITUTE OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 27, 1984

Mr. Phil Gardner and Mr. Bob Carpenter
Winchelsea Elementary School
P.O. Box 2260
Parksville, B.C.
V0R 2S0

Dear Mr. Gardner and Mr. Carpenter:

On behalf of the Educational Research Institute of British Columbia, I am pleased to inform you that a Discretionary Grant in support of your project has been authorized as follows:

AMOUNT: $850.00

PROJECT TITLE: A Needs Assessment for Transition from Elementary Schools to Middle Schools [as undertaken in School District No. 69 (Qualicum)]

DISCRETIONARY GRANT NUMBER: 363

The award is made with the understanding that a final report will be forthcoming immediately upon completion of the project and that acknowledgement of ERIBC support will be made in future publications arising from your project. The Institute considers your project to be of potential benefit to others in the field, therefore, the final report is important as the vehicle through which knowledge and results of the project may be shared. The title as indicated has been changed as discussed with Larry Hnetka, ERIBC's Communications Coordinator.

When conducting your project or reporting on it, all references to ERIBC's involvement should read as follows, "Financial support for the project was provided through a grant from the Educational Research Institute of B.C."



701 - 601 West Broadway
Vancouver, British Columbia
Canada V5Z 4C2

Tel. (604) 873-3801

Please acknowledge acceptance of this grant in writing. Arrangements regarding disbursement of the funds can be made at your convenience by writing to the Senior Financial Officer at ERIBC; all correspondence should refer to the grant number quoted above. It is also the policy of the Institute that $50.00 of a Discretionary Grant be withheld until ERIBC has received the final report on a project. Upon submitting the final report you may claim this balance by writing to the Senior Financial Officer.

Please feel free to contact the Communications Coordinator should you require any further consultation. Thank you for your interest in the Discretionary Grants Program.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Audrey Sojonky,
Executive Director

AS/fs

cc. D.D. Bosnich
Superintendent of Schools
S.D. No. 69 (Qualicum)